THE · MASTER
MUSICIANS
HANDEL

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In Ignorance
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The Master Musicians

Edited by
FREDERICK J. CROWEST

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GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL Esq!
born February XXIII MDCLXXXIV.
died April XIV. MDCCLIX.
L.F.Roubiliac inv.et sc.

Handel

By

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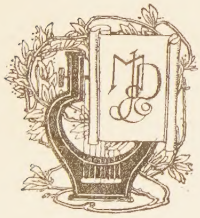
With

Illustrations and Portraits



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Preface

MANY accounts have appeared of the life of the great Saxon Musician who left his fatherland in the eighteenth century in order to settle among us. Handel naturalised as a British subject, and so identified his music with the English character, that not only is his name a household word amongst us all, whether musical or unmusical, but in the "Dictionary of National Biography" he is given a place as an English composer, and his remains lie in the "Poets' Corner" of Westminster Abbey.

The following account is an endeavour to give a popular narrative of the chief events of his life, without entering much into technicalities which, though interesting to the musician, are not perhaps so necessary for the general reader. The exhaustive treatises of Dr Chrysander, M. Victor Schœlcher, and the late Mr Rockstro are full of details and discussions of the greatest interest and value to the student who wishes to go deeply into the works of the great composer.

I have avoided the irritating attempts of Hawkins and others to represent Handel's pronunciation of the English language by a spelling which makes many words almost unintelligible: it is sufficient that the reader should know that Handel's pronunciation of English, like that of many foreigners, was imperfect, and that its imperfections

chiefly consisted of using d in place of t; g in place of hard c; p in place of b, etc.

Original MSS. and small portions of the personal property of Handel, carefully preserved by their present private owners, are often exhibited to the public: for instance at the International Exhibition of musical instruments at the Crystal Palace in 1900, a special "Handel Collection" was shown, in which might be seen his watch, the autograph of his will, portions of his scores, a set of orchestral instruments in use in his time, contemporary play-bills and engravings, etc.

In order to interrupt the course of the narrative as little as possible, I have dealt with the compositions in a couple of short chapters at the end, and in a Glossary I have given an outline of the life of some of the chief characters who came into connection with Handel.

I take this opportunity of thanking those gentlemen who have been kind enough to assist me: especially the Town Authorities of Halle, who caused two excellent photographs to be taken for this work (pages 6 and 183); Mr F. J. H. Jenkinson, Librarian of the Cambridge University Library, who gave me special facilities, without which the publication of my book would have been much delayed; and the Rev. H. E. Robertson, Rector of Whitchurch, for the photograph of the organ at Whitchurch (page 70); also to Messrs C. Scribner & Sons for permission to reproduce some pictures from their Cyclopædia of Music.

C. F. ABDY WILLIAMS.

BRADFIELD, *February* 1901.

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Chapter I

The condition of music and musicians at the end of the seventeenth century—Handel's ancestry—His birth and childhood—Visits Weissenfels—Becomes a pupil of Zachau—Visits Berlin—Becomes organist of a church in his native town.

In the year 1685, which saw the birth of Bach and Handel, the art of music was in a flourishing condition in Italy, and the influence of Italian music and Italian singers had spread over the whole of Europe. Instrumental music pure and simple was in its infancy: while opera and church music reigned supreme. Voices were cultivated to a high point of perfection, and many musicians were singers as well as composers.

Condition of Music at the time of Handel's Birth

In France, Lulli (1633-1687), had introduced "accompanied recitative," and had made other improvements, paying special attention to correct declamation, and settling the form of the overture.

Italian music had reached Germany, and was much cultivated at the various Courts; but native German cantors were also busy, founding the school of church and organ music which culminated in John Sebastian Bach.

The "Singspiel," a theatrical representation, in which spoken dialogue was interspersed with songs, had been much cultivated, especially at Hamburg, where, however,

it was soon to give way before German opera under Keiser.[1]

Purcell influenced by Italian Music

In England, though music was still suffering from the effects of Puritanism, a great composer had arisen in Henry Purcell, 1658-1695, one of a family of native musicians. Purcell confessedly "endeavoured a just imitation of the most famed Italian Masters." He was prolific in every department of music then known, and established a form of English opera, which was used for a century and a half. Italian opera had not reached England when he died. Except Purcell, no English composers of this time can be said to have established a European reputation. Their compositions are mostly only adapted for performance in English cathedrals, and the tendency to import foreign musicians for all other than church music was becoming apparent.

Importance of Singers

Singers were beginning to be of supreme importance. Both opera and church music were under their influence. The dramatic element in the former was subservient to the necessity for providing proper opportunities of display for the prima donna, seconda donna, primo uomo, secondo uomo, etc., each of whom must have his or her allotted arias, whether in opera or oratorio. Much of the music was written for artificial sopranos, some of whom became famous in departments other than music; thus Farinelli, a male soprano of noble birth, after making a reputation on most of the stages of Europe, became the chief political adviser of the King of Spain.

Church music was represented in both the Roman and

[1] The Singspiel is still cultivated in Germany.

Lutheran Churches by the Mass, the Oratorio, the Church Cantata, the Motet; Passion music performed during Lent was a feature of the Lutheran Church, and was often called oratorio:[1] and the Chorale, a form peculiar to this church, was very widely cultivated.

Continental Church Music

In the early days of opera and oratorio, counterpoint had been to a certain extent in abeyance, having given way to the newly discovered charms of harmony; but in the latter decades of the seventeenth century the best composers had reverted to the use of counterpoint, in combination with the two modern scales, and the wider harmonic horizon which had thus been opened up. The old modes had almost disappeared, though they continued for some time to come to influence composers, especially those who wrote for the church.

Much instrumental music was composed, but it had not the important position that it afterwards attained in the quartet and symphony. The high school of violin solo playing was being founded by Corelli (1653-1713), Tartini, Vivaldi, Geminiani and others; and the famous Italian school of violin makers had culminated in Stradivarius (1650-1737). Organ music was being developed in Germany by Pachelbel, Buxtehude and many others, among whom the various members of the Bach family were prominent. The orchestra was gradually being improved, as an

Instrumental Music

[1] Carissimi's oratorio, "Jeptha," followed the plan of the Passion music: a "Historicus" narrates the events in recitative, while the various persons and the chorus enter at appropriate places. The work is in Latin, and the only instrument used to accompany is the organ.

accompaniment to the voices in drama and church music; and it was also used for dance music, the dances being composed in "Suites" of pieces. Of these old dances, the minuet still survives as one of the movements in the sonata and symphony. In Italy every town had at least one opera house; in Venice there were six. In Germany each town sustained a band of "town musicians" whose duties were to play the accompaniments to the church cantatas, and to provide whatever instrumental music was required for public occasions. They, like the choirs, were paid partly by the town and partly by the money collected in the streets for out-door performances.

The Social Position of Musicians

The position of musicians was not attractive from a modern point of view. Their best chance of success was, as a rule, to obtain permanent employment in the establishment of royal or ducal houses, in which they held the position of servants; they could not leave without permission, which was frequently refused. But music was just beginning to take a rank among the learned professions, and we meet instances about this time of troubles arising through musicians, unconsciously in many cases, resenting the inferior position to which custom relegated them. This feeling was, however, not confined to musicians: most learned men were obliged to be subservient to some rich patron, on whom they depended for their living, and for getting their works published. There was not as yet a public to appeal to. The arts and sciences were merely looked upon as amusements or recreations for the upper classes of society. In England the practice of music was looked upon as a trade. One Green, a blind organist of St Giles', Cripplegate, was, as

late as 1724 fined £5 for exercising the trade of teaching music within the City of London, he not being a member of the Company of Musicians, and his means of living was thus ruthlessly taken from him.

The Handel Family

In 1609 there settled at Halle in Saxony a master coppersmith from Breslau, name Valentine Hendel.[1] He became a Burgher of the city, married the daughter of a coppersmith named Beichling of Eisleben, and was succeeded in his business by his two elder sons, Valentin and Christoph. His third son, Georg, born in 1622, became a surgeon and barber.[2] At the age of twenty he married Anna Oettinger, the widow of a barber, and became thereby a Burgher of Halle.[3] A few years after his marriage he was advanced to the dignity of surgeon and valet-de-chambre to the Saxon and Brandenburg Courts. By this marriage he had three sons and three daughters. When he was sixty-two years old his wife died, and he married Dorothea Taust, daughter of the Pastor of Giebichenstein, a village

[1] The name is variously spelt Handel, Hendel, Hændel (the modern German form), Hendeler, Händeler, Hendtler, Hendall, Handell, Handle, Hondel. In Italy Handel retained the original spelling of Hendel; his parents used Händel to distinguish their particular branch of the Hendel family. After settling in England, he always used the spelling familiar to us. In this work, which is for English readers, the spelling Handel will be used throughout.

[2] The profession of surgery was in those days nearly always combined with that of a barber. The striped pole, still seen outside some barbers' shops, is supposed to represent the bandages used in surgery.

[3] The widow was ten years his senior, and Chrysander supposes Georg Handel to have been an apprentice of her former husband.

on the Saale a short distance from Halle. The offspring of the second marriage consisted of two sons and two daughters. The eldest son died at his birth, and the younger, born on February 23rd, 1685, was named Georg Friedrich.

Birth of George Frederick Handel

It is interesting to notice the conditions under which this child, who was destined to influence the whole civilised world, entered it. His father was sixty-four years old: a very respectable tradesman, who had pushed himself by his own energy and ability to the highest point in his profession. He was ambitious of leaving a good name behind him; seems not to have amassed a fortune, but to have lived comfortably as a citizen of Halle. The house in which he lived at this time was no mean one as can be seen by the photograph, and he had purchased a family vault in the churchyard for himself and his heirs.

The mother was thirty-three years old, and we are told was "clear-minded, of strong piety, with a great knowledge of the Bible; deeply attached to her parents; with little wish for marriage, even in the bloom of her youth; a capable manager, earnest and of pleasant manners."[1] We shall see that the child inherited the qualities of both parents: from his father his ambition to distinguish himself by making use of the enormous genius with which he was endowed: and from his mother that piety and filial devotion and charity which were characteristic of him.

George Frederic was baptised at the Liebfrauenkirche at Halle on February 24th, the sponsors being the Steward of Langendorf, Anna Taust, an unmarried daughter of the Pastor, and Zacharias Kleinhempel, a barber of Halle.

[1] Funeral sermon on Dorothea Handel, quoted by Chrysander, vol. i., p. 7, etc.

Birthplace

Childhood

Music began to attract the child's attention from his earliest years. In the nursery his only toys were trumpets, drums, flutes, and anything that produced musical sounds. For a time this caused amusement, but it soon began to be serious. In the opinion of old Georg Handel, music was "an elegant art and a fine amusement; yet, if considered as an occupation, it had little dignity as having for its subject nothing better than mere pleasure and entertainment," [1] and in this he undoubtedly expressed the general opinion.

The Child's Toys

No doubt old Handel was not far wrong in thus condemning music from the point of view of a man living in a small German town, and knowing nothing of the great side of the art. At that time the town musicians were often of a low class, who subsisted largely by "piping before the doors" of the inhabitants. Organists and cantors were, with few exceptions, poorly paid, and therefore thought little of, for the efforts of the Bach family to raise the position of their art would scarcely have had effect as yet in a town so far from Thuringia as Halle. German opera was not yet invented: and in Italian opera, old Handel would only see the fashionable amusements of the wealthy, carried out by foreign hirelings. The father, wishing to raise his son in the social scale, did all in his power to quench this terrible trait in his character. Since music was taught in the grammar schools, the boy was not allowed to attend them: he was prevented going to any place where music was performed: all instruments were banished from the house, and the boy

Efforts to suppress the boy's love of Music

[1] Mainwaring, "Memoirs of Handel," 1760.

was forbidden ever to touch them, or to enter any house where "such kind of furniture" was in use. The case appeared so desperate that some suggested cutting off his fingers.[1]

But, though prevented from learning instruments, the boy was bound at any rate to hear music. Chorales were played every evening on the tower of the Liebfrauen Church; the chorale and cantata would be heard by him when attending divine worship; and the father could not stop the music which at Halle, as in every other German town, was weekly performed in the streets by the choirs and town musicians.[2] The street music of those days was not the blatant noise produced by the mechanical organs of the present time; it was more or less artistically performed by persons regularly employed by the Church or town. Hence the boy could not entirely be deprived of the satisfaction of the strongest desire of his nature. Moreover he had from childhood a naturally obstinate character; and, just as in after-life he surmounted obstacles which would have crushed most men, so in early childhood the opposition he encountered seems to have had the effect of making him more determined than ever. A story is usually

German Street Music

[1] Mainwaring.

[2] This custom is still preserved in small towns in Thuringia. The writer in 1899 heard good performances of some part-songs of Mendelssohn and others by the choirs at Arnstadt and Ohrdruff. Burney, in his "State of Music in Germany, etc.," p. 73, mentions the singing of young students in three or four parts in the streets of Frankfort; and after dinner he heard several symphonies reasonably well played by a street band. Military music was, and is still, regularly performed in German towns.

accepted as true, that by some means he managed to convey to a garret a small clavichord before he was seven years of age, and there he taught himself to play while the household was asleep, or too occupied to notice what he was doing. The story is not impossible. The clavichord was of various sizes, and the smaller kinds were extremely portable. Pretorius gives a picture of an "octave clavichord" which must have been very small indeed, and Mersennus speaks of one two and a half feet in length by only one-third of a foot in breadth. These small instruments were used by nuns when practising in their cells, their very weak tone not penetrating the walls; and it does not seem impossible that a determined boy of six years old should be able to smuggle such a clavichord into the house, and to use it without being found out. Schœlcher suggests that his mother or nurse may possibly have helped him, and Chrysander suggests his Aunt Anna. But whether the story is true or not, there is no doubt that by the age of seven Handel was able to astonish men by his extraordinary musical powers.

Handel learns the Clavichord by stealth

A half-brother of George Frederic[1] was at this time valet de chambre to the Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels, whose court was known for its good music, and old Georg proposed to go and visit him. The child begged hard to be taken, but was refused permission. The journey of some forty English miles from Halle was made by post-chaise, and young Handel, determined to go, ran after the carriage till it was well away from Halle. His father discovered him, and severely scolded him. The boy

Visit to Weissenfels

[1] Chrysander says a cousin, Georg Christian.

answered with tears and passionate entreaty to be taken into the chaise: and, as it was too far to send him back alone, he was taken in, while his father found some means of informing the mother of the escapade, in order to relieve her anxiety. Arrived at Weissenfels, the boy managed to get into the chapel, and was allowed to play the voluntary at the conclusion of the service. The Duke heard him, made enquiries who he was, and had the boy and his father brought before him. Then he turned to the old surgeon, talked seriously to him about the importance of the art of music: then went on to say that though every parent had naturally a right to choose the profession he thought his son would do well in, yet in his opinion it would be no less than a sin against the commonweal to deprive the world of so much genius, by preventing the boy from following a profession for which nature had so evidently marked him out.

He was far from urging that the musical studies of anyone should be followed to the detriment of other things, but that it was possible to combine them with other studies; his wish was only that, in the choice of a profession, no violence should be done to the natural bent of the character. He then filled the boy's pocket with money, and promised him a reward if he minded his studies. The Duke urged that music should at least be tolerated, and that the boy should be given a competent teacher.

The poor father did not know what to answer: he said nothing for and nothing against the proposal. He half desired that nature should follow her course; but his chief wish always lay in the direction of the law. It is not without interest that at this very time a lively discussion was going on at Hanover as to the proper position of

music among the arts and sciences. It was asserted that it could not rank among them at all. Steffani published several pamphlets in which he boldly contended that not only was it both an art and a science, but that it had its foundations deep down in human nature, and as such must rank equally with all other human learning. How strangely behindhand must we English appear to intellectual foreigners when we confine the word "art" to painting alone, and speak of "art and music" as separate things! There are educated Englishmen even yet, who look upon music as merely a polite accomplishment, not to be taken seriously.

Handel is given regular instruction in Music

On his return to Halle, Georg placed his son under the charge of Zachau, organist of the Liebfrauenkirche. Zachau was a learned and very industrious musician, and his new pupil "pleased him so much that he never thought he could do enough for him." He taught him the organ, counterpoint and composition. The master and pupil analysed together a very large collection of every kind of music of the best German and Italian composers, which Zachau possessed. Zachau explained the differences of style, the excellencies and defects of the various masters, and made his pupil copy many scores that he might more thoroughly assimilate the various methods of composition. He became to Handel an oracle, and the feeling of love and respect for him never ceased throughout Handel's life. The instruction lasted three years, and, as soon as the pupil was sufficiently advanced, he was made to compose a motet or cantata every week,[1] besides fugues on given

[1] None of these early vocal works are known to be in existence.

subjects. In the Buckingham Palace collection there are six sonatas for two oboes and a bassoon, composed at the age of eleven. The style is very similar to that of Bach's organ trios, the two oboes being usually in free imitation, while the bassoon or cembalo perform an independent bass.

Composition came very rapidly to him, and Chrysander considers that he developed in this direction earlier than J. S. Bach. In after years these trios, which had been discovered in Germany by Lord Polwarth, were shown by Weidemann, a flute-player, and member of the orchestra in London, to the composer, who laughed and said, "I used to compose like the devil in those days, chiefly for the oboe, which was my favourite instrument."

But these studies did not occupy the whole of his time. From early youth Handel was, like his great contemporary Sebastian Bach, an indefatigable worker, and he learned the harpsichord, violin and oboe in addition to his work with Zachau, while he also deputised for his master at the organ. Moreover, his poor old father, still secretly hoping to wean him from his dreadful predilection for music, made him go through the regular course in the Latin classes.

Zachau, who had a considerable reputation as a teacher, acknowledged in 1696 that he could teach him no more, and recommended that he should be sent to Berlin, where the Elector of Brandenburg had established a good opera-house, in which all the best Italian singers performed.[1]

[1] Music was very much cultivated here by the Electress Sophia Charlotte, Princess of Hanover. A pupil of Steffani, she was a first-rate musician, and studied Philosophy under Leibnitz. She was in the habit of personally directing operas at the harpsichord; the singers and dancers were princes and princesses, while the orchestra consisted of the best artists from all countries, who were received with open arms at the court.

Visit to Berlin

Visit to Berlin

He was accordingly taken there by a friend of his father's, and soon astonished all who heard him. He met here Attilio Ariosti, who "would take him upon his knee, and make him play on his harpsichord for an hour together," and treated him with every consideration. Bononcini, who was also in Berlin, was of a sour disposition, and treated him with scorn. He composed a chromatic cantata, with a ground bass for the harpsichord full of difficulties, and requested Handel to play it at sight, hoping thereby to damage his growing reputation. Handel played it perfectly easily, and Bononcini henceforward treated him as a rival.

Handel does not seem to have had regular instruction in Berlin, but to have picked up all the knowledge he could from hearing music, and mixing with musicians. After a little while his father became alarmed by a proposal on the part of the Elector to send him to Italy to complete his musical education, and afterwards to attach him to his court. This was no uncommon proceeding in those days : a clever child would be educated at the expense of some great man, and would afterwards be, though nominally free, attached to the court, without much chance of leaving it for the rest of his life. A case of this kind occurred later with respect to J. S. Bach's son Emmanuel, who had the greatest difficulty in escaping the "species of slavery"[1] in which he was involved as Cembalist to Frederick the Great at Berlin. Whenever he demanded his release, his pay was simply augmented under pretence of additional work ; his wife and her children, being Prussian by birth, could not legally leave Prussian territory without permission, which was withheld. Having once

[1] Fétis.

escaped to Hamburg, no inducements would persuade him ever to take employment under a German prince again. Another case in point was that of Dr Pepusch, who escaped to England as a country where liberty was more understood than in Germany.

Handel's father therefore had good grounds for the dread of his son becoming involved with the court of Berlin; and Handel himself had an independence of character which in later years cost him his health, his fortune, and nearly his life. He would never be dependent on a wealthy patron, as most artists and men of letters were in those days. Chrysander also points out another motive for declining the offer. The father still hoped his son might become a lawyer. He was hastily brought back to Halle, and resumed his studies under Zachau, analysing, copying and composing large quantities of music, and working hard in every way that could tend towards acquiring skill and knowledge. In a part of Thuringia not so very remote from Halle there was at this time another boy, who was ruining his sight by copying forbidden music by moonlight, and was eking out a scanty living by singing at weddings, funerals and in the street, while working hard to perfect himself as a composer and performer.

Returns to Halle

While Handel was thus occupied, his father died (February 11, 1697); and it would soon become necessary for him to work for his living; but he continued his studies, going through the complete course of Latin, and not leaving school till he was seventeen.

Death of Handel's father

In order to carry out his father's wishes, if it were possible, he in 1702 entered the University of Halle as a

law student. From the year 1697 he had been deputising for Joh. Christoph Leporin, organist of the Castle and the Cathedral; and when Leporin was dismissed for neglect of duty and general bad conduct, Handel succeeded him in March 1702 as organist. Nature now conquered; the law was given up for ever, and music was to be henceforth the work of his life.

Handel is appointed Cathedral organist of Halle

On his accepting the post, the usual exhortations and admonitions were administered: he was to fulfil the duties entrusted to him in a way becoming a competent organist, with faithful and diligent care; to be present on Sundays and Festivals, and on any extra occasions required; to play the organ properly, to play over the psalm or hymn tune with fine harmony; to come in good time to the church; to look after the organ; to give advice as to any necessary repairs; to give due respect to priests and elders of the church; to be obedient to them, and to live peaceably with the church attendants; and to lead a Christian and exemplary life.

For all this he was to receive free lodging and a salary of £7, 10s. a year. Before Leporin's time the salary had been £3, and the holder of the post died "probably from hunger," says Chrysander.

The organ was a good one, well-decorated, with twenty-eight sounding stops and two keyboards, built in 1667. It had a remarkable set of bellows, three in number, which contained so much wind that one depression of the three levers[1] was sufficient for 180 bars of music, or the whole of the Creed.

[1] The bellows were of course worked by the feet, as in all German organs. The blower is called "Bälgentreter," *i.e.* "Bellows-treader."

In this, his first appointment, Handel found much to occupy and interest him. It was the rule in Halle, as in all other German towns of any pretensions, for a cantata to be performed by the choir and town musicians every Sunday. At Leipsic the cantata was performed on alternate Sundays at the Thomas and Nicolai Churches; but at Halle the choir and orchestra served no less than seven different churches in turn.

The cantata takes much the same place in the Lutheran Church as the anthem in the English cathedral service; and Handel had now ample opportunity of acquiring skill in composition in a very practical manner.

But he did more than this; he caused his former school-fellows to meet together for music on half-holidays at his mother's house, and his fame soon began to spread beyond his native town.

At this time there was in Magdeburg another youth, four years Handel's senior, who was giving his relations much concern by his musical tendencies. This was George Philip Teleman, who, like Handel, had been destined for the law, but who became so famous in his own time that Hawkins describes him as "the greatest Church musician of Germany." Later on he was chosen to succeed Kuhnau at the Thomas Church at Leipsic, but for some reason declined the post, which was then given to John Sebastian Bach. In 1701 he passed through Halle on his way to Leipsic to study law, and there meeting the "already important" G. F. Handel, he was almost persuaded to give up law for music. He struggled on, however, heard lectures, and worked hard at law, until his musical abilities were discovered by the Leipsic authorities,

George Philip Teleman

who engaged him to compose cantatas for the Thomaskirche, and made him organist of the new church. Law was given up: he studied music, and was in constant intercourse with Handel, and the two young enthusiasts, whose early experiences had so much in common, mutually encouraged one another.[1]

Handel served his "Probation Year," composed several hundred cantatas, which he did not think worth keeping, and then finding that he could learn no more at Halle, left for Hamburg in January 1703. How he made the journey we are not told, but it was not probably done on foot, for he seems always to have been better off than J. S. Bach.

Handel leaves Halle

[1] Halle is only twenty-one miles from Leipsic.

Chapter II

The Singspiel and Opera at Hamburg—Keiser—Handel joins the Opera at Hamburg—Journey to Lübeck—Matheson—Handel fights a duel—His first Opera—Description of *Almira*—His second Opera, *Nero*—Keiser endeavours to rival Handel—*Florindo*—Handel goes to Italy—Florence, Rome, Venice—*Rodrigo*—*Agrippina*—Enthusiasm of the Venetians.

Music in Hamburg

The Singspiel had been attempted, but without success, by Heinrich Schütz in 1628. It gave way before the Italian operas of the wealthy. Fifty years afterwards, in 1678, a regular theatre was established at Hamburg by some private persons, in spite of great difficulties. Preachers stormed at it from the pulpit, and scattered pamphlets through the city; religious and civil feuds divided the town into parties, too occupied to go to the theatre; yet the Singspiel gradually won its way. It must be observed that Hamburg, being a free town, was a paradise for artists, who here had to do with the public, and the public only; they themselves were free, and not under the will of a royal or ducal employer, as in a Residenz-stadt or Court. Moreover, the theatre itself was not dominated by Italian singers as were the court theatres. None but Germans composed for it, or performed at it, and what they produced was for the benefit of burghers like themselves. The first Singspiele were exclusively

occupied with scriptural events, and seem to have been the successors of the old miracle plays. Religious subjects were given up for ever in 1692, their place being taken by secular subjects, which were considered far more suitable for the stage than the former; and scriptural subjects were now confined to the Oratorio and the Church Cantatas.

At the time of Handel's visit, Hamburg was at the zenith of its musical fame, and both musicians and poets of the first rank were working there. Among these were Postel and Menantes, who wrote the dramas which Keiser set to music. Keiser directed the theatre for forty years, and raised it to a degree of excellence surpassing that of the famous Berlin theatre. He composed no less than one hundred and twenty Operas and Singspiele, which became known and popular throughout Northern Germany, and even reached Paris. The subjects of the operas, like those of Handel, in England, in later years, were all taken from classical mythology and history, and were treated as mere plots on which to put together eighteenth-century ideas of love stories. The performers were students, apprentices, and flower-girls, who happened to have good voices; chief among them being Conradi, the daughter of a Dresden barber, whose musical education was so poor that she had to be taught everything by ear.

Matheson

Among Handel's first Hamburg acquaintances was Matheson, who introduced him to others, and obtained for him access to the various organs and concerts. He also introduced him to John Wick, the English ambassador, in whose family music was assiduously cultivated; and here he obtained pupils and engagements.

Handel joins the orchestra

Matheson tells us that Handel played a ripieno second violin in the opera-house orchestra, and pretended, for a joke, that he did not know how to count five; but on one occasion the harpsichordist (who was at that time also the conductor) being absent, and Handel taking his place, he proved himself to be a great master. Handel seemed fond of a joke, though he laughed little. Matheson speaks of several things that occurred to himself and Handel, which seemed to have caused them amusement, but of which the context is lost.

Visit to Lübeck

On August 17th, 1703, Handel and Matheson journeyed by post, in company with a pigeon-fancier, to Lübeck, 40 miles to the north-east of Hamburg. Here Dietrich Buxtehude, then advanced in years, was organist of the Marienkirche, and was seeking a successor, who was bound to marry the daughter of the retiring organist as a condition of holding the post.[1] Matheson, who had been invited to become a candidate, says: "I took Handel with me; we played on all the organs and clavicymbals there, and finally agreed that he should only play on the organ, and I only on the clavicymbal. We listened with much attention to good artists in the Marienkirche. But, as a matrimonial alliance was proposed in the business, for which neither of us had the slightest inclination, we departed, after receiving many tokens of esteem, and having had much

[1] It was not uncommon in those days that an organist, cantor, or clergyman should be obliged to marry the daughter or widow of his predecessor.—Chrysander, p. 86.

enjoyment."[1] Handel was not a brilliant violin player, but his skill on the organ was by this time very great. "He was greater on the organ than Kuhnau," says Matheson, "especially in extempore fugues and counterpoints; but he knew little of melody till he came to the Hamburg opera. . . . In the last century scarcely anyone thought of melody, but everything was influenced by harmony only. He had, most of the time, free board at my father's table, and in return he showed me several contrapuntal effects, while I did him no small services in the dramatic style; and we helped one another." Matheson also tells us that he composed at that time "very long, long arias, and endless cantatas, which, though they had a full harmony, had not proper taste or skill in treatment; but in course of time they became much more polished, through the School of Opera, with which Handel was connected."

Matheson's Criticism

Matheson, who was four years Handel's senior, was at this time tutor to the son of the English envoy. He soon afterwards became secretary of the English Legation at Hamburg, and married the daughter of an English clergyman. He had a most remarkable career. At nine years old he played the organ in several churches, sang songs of his own composition, playing the accompaniment on the harp, learned the double-bass, violin, flute, and oboe. A little later he began the study of the law, learned the English, Italian and French languages,

[1] The proffered bride was twelve years older than Matheson. A bridegroom for her, and organist for the church, were found in the person of one Schieferdecker.

thorough-bass, counterpoint, fugue and singing. At the age of fifteen he was singing the chief soprano parts in the opera at Kiel; at the age of eighteen he produced an opera of his own at Hamburg, and became attached to that theatre as one of the principal tenor singers, which post he held in addition to his connection with the British Embassy. He wrote many operas and masses, twenty-eight oratorios, many sonatas, and other music. But he is chiefly known by his literary work on every conceivable subject connected with music, such as the works of Aristoxenus, Bacon, thorough-bass, biography, science, criticism, acoustics, etc. His ambition was to publish a work for every year that he lived, and he accomplished more than this, for when he died at the age of eighty-three he had published eighty-eight books. In addition to his extraordinary musical erudition and capacity, he was an accomplished fencer and dancer and courtier. Such was the man with whom Handel was now on the most intimate terms.

A Duel

On December 5, 1704, Matheson's opera, *Cleopatra*, was performed. Matheson was in the habit of conducting at the harpsichord when he was not singing the part of Antonius, and returning to the harpsichord after the death of this character, which took place about half an hour before the end. But on this occasion Handel refused to leave the instrument, and a quarrel ensued. Matheson gave Handel a box on the ear as they left the theatre, and they fought with swords in the market-place before a crowd of people. Fortunately Matheson's sword broke upon a large metal button on Handel's coat, and no great harm was done. Through the mediation of a councillor and a director of the theatre, they became better

friends than before. Handel dined with Matheson on December 30, and they went together to the rehearsal of Handel's first opera, *Almira, Queen of Castile*, a singspiel performed in the large theatre of Hamburg. The text of this opera was written by Feustking, a theological student, from an Italian original.

Handel's First Opera

The original MS. is lost, and the existing copy in the Royal Library at Berlin is incomplete. The characters are three sopranos, two basses and three tenors, with chorus of Castilian grandees, courtiers and guards. The first act opens with a scene in the amphitheatre of Valladolid, in which Almira is about to be crowned by Consalvo, Prince of Segovia, to whom is allotted a bass part. Trumpeters and drummers are arranged on balconies on each side of the stage. Consalvo addresses the Queen in German recitative followed by an aria—

"Almire
Regiere
Und führe
Beglücket den Scepter, grossmüthig die Krohn."[1]

[1] Chrysander tells us that Feustking's words for Matheson's *Cleopatra* were so improper that several pages of his libretto had to be suppressed. Feustking thereupon attacked Hunold Menantes, who was the author of *Nebuchadnezzar*. Menantes replied by parodying the above rhymes in *Almira*, as follows:—

"Mein Käthgen
Im Städgen
Hats Lädgen
Geofnet, beglücket, grossmüthig im Schrank."

("My Kittie has opened a little shop in the town, and is fortunate and generous in business.") This hit Feustking hard, for un-

(May Almire reign, and bear the sceptre with happiness, and the crown with magnanimity.) The crowning takes place, and the chorus sing eleven bars in Italian, "Viva, viva Almira."

Then follows a chaconne, to which the court dances, and then a saraband, afterwards used in *Rinaldo* for the well-known song, "Lascia ch'io pianga."[1] Almira, in a German recitative, appoints Osman (tenor), son of Consalvo, her field-marshal, and Fernando her secretary. The latter sings his thanks to the Queen in German recitative, followed by an Italian aria. A letter is brought to Almira from her father; Consalvo urges her to read it in a presto aria, "Leset, ihr funkelnden Augen mit Fleiss." Almira, in a German recitative and Italian aria, confesses her love for Fernando. This aria is in the well-known *Da Capo* form.

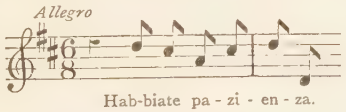
We are now introduced to a Royal Garden, in which Edilia, a princess, sings of her love for Osman, accompanied (during part of the time) by two solo violins, two flutes, and a bass. Osman appears, refuses Edilia's proffered love, whereupon Edilia invokes thunderbolts and other disagreeable things on his head in Italian, while he answers in German. The jealousy of Almira now introduces complications. She disturbs Fernando in the act

known to Menantes, he had a mistress called Catherine. The matter was taken up by others; hundreds of pamphlets appeared in course of time; Feustking was accused of atheism, and the burghers being in a state of ferment over certain ecclesiastical matters, the affair eventually led to disturbances which had to be put down by military forces in 1708. One of the pamphlets written by Feustking is interesting as containing the first printed reference to Handel, in which he speaks of the "excellent music of Herrn Hendel."

[1] It was also used in the oratorio, *Il trionfo del tempo*.

of carving "Ich liebe di(ch)" on a tree, and takes for granted that the words should read "Ich lieb" Edi(lia). A fine aria in E minor follows, "Geloso tormento mi va rodendo il cor." ("The torment of jealousy gnaws at my heart.") The scene now discloses a ball room in the palace, with a band of oboes in the gallery. Edilia chooses Fernando for her partner; Osman becomes jealous, Edilia tries to revenge herself through Osman's jealousy. A suite of dances now follows, in which all the performers take part. The Queen discovers Fernando dancing with Edilia; a quarrel ensues, the Queen sings "Ingrato, spietato" (the music of which is unfortunately lost) and the first act ends.

The second act begins in the Queen's audience chamber, to which Raymondo (bass), king of the Moors, is brought in; all the other characters stand round the throne. Some bye-play in Italian and German fills the first three scenes. In scene 4 Fernando is discovered writing a letter in his room, and orders his servant Tabarco to keep the door shut. Someone outside knocks, and Tabarco sings a kind of patter song—



accompanied by *violas* and basses only.

Osman (the knocker) is eventually admitted, and asks Fernando to assist him in making love to Almira. Almira, however, is expected by Fernando, so Osman, in a German aria accompanied by two flutes, viola di braccio solo and bass, hides himself, and sings "Sprich vor mir ein

süsses Wort; rede, flehe," etc.: "Speak for me a kindly word; urge and pray her," etc. Almira arrives; becomes again jealous on seeing the letter written by Fernando, which is intended for her, but which she takes for granted is intended for Edilia. More misunderstandings take place, in Italian and German, which are finally settled before the end of the act.

In scene 7 Osman is still hiding. Consalvo now appears, and with considerable diplomacy offers his son Osman to Almira in a German aria. Osman now comes out of hiding, and renounces Almira in favour of Edilia.

Scene 8 takes place in another part of the Court. Raymondo now makes love to Almira, who answers in a very beautiful accompanied recitative, "Ich kann nicht mehr verschweigen," "I can no more keep silence," followed by an aria, "Movei passi a le ruine." Almira, seeing Osman coming, hides. Osman challenges Fernando: Almira snatches Osman's sword away. Fernando laughs at Osman to the accompaniment of two oboes and bassoon.

More quarrels take place. Fernando, supposed to be a foundling, is discovered to be a prince; a comic scene takes place, in which Tabarco gets hold of a mail-bag and reads all the love letters in it, making sarcastic remarks thereon.

Act III. opens with one of the favourite devices of those days, in which the actors, becoming the audience, have a play acted before them. Such a scene is here enacted in honour of Raymondo, king of the Moors.

Fernando, dressed as Europa, enters on a chariot, preceded by a band of oboes, followed by a crowd of Europeans who dance. Osman, representing a Moor, is brought in under a splendid baldachino, carried by

twelve Moors, preceded by a band of trumpets, and followed by African people, who dance a rigaudon. Consalvo follows as Asia, surrounded by lions, preceded by a band of cymbals, drums and fifes, and followed by Asiatics, who dance the saraband, which had previously been heard in the first act (Lascia ch'io pianga).

Tabarco represents Foolishness, with harlequins and charlatans, while his band consists of a hurdy-gurdy and bagpipe. He sings, with two oboes as accompaniment (in German): "Come and celebrate my fame; for the greater part of earth is subject to my sway." The charlatans then dance a gigue.

More quarrelling, daggers are drawn, and Fernando finds himself in prison through the duplicity of Consalvo, who tries to get Almira to sentence him to death, and nearly succeeds. Tabarco brings a pretended death-warrant to Fernando, in prison, but is followed by Almira, who, overhearing him sing of her and not Edilia, releases him. General understanding all round now takes place —a short chorus occurs, of which the music is lost, and the opera concludes with the usual trio, in which all the principal voices take part.

We have given a fairly full account of Handel's first opera, as it shows the kind of material with which he had to work. If we eliminate the short choruses, and imagine the language to be Italian throughout, we have the pattern on which all the later operas were composed: *i.e.* a succession of recitatives and arias connected together by a slight and very obvious plot. Handel made the most of his opportunities, and many of the arias even in this early work are exceedingly fine. That he was not insensible to the orchestral possibilities is shown by the use of the

two oboes and a bassoon in the mocking song, and the veiled sound of the violas in the song "Have patience."

Second Opera

This opera, produced on January 8th, 1705, had so great a success that it was performed without intermission until February 25th, when Handel's second opera, *The Success of Love through Blood and Murder, or Nero*, represented as a singspiel, was performed with great applause. Matheson took the chief *rôle* in both these operas.

From the account of *Almira* given above we see that it was put on the stage with all the magnificence available at that time, and in all Handel's later operas the same luxury of scenery and action is found. He never did things by halves. He supplied the finest music and required the finest singers, orchestra, and stage effects procurable.

The words of *Nero* were by Feustking, and, out of three hundred Hamburg opera texts read by Chrysander, he finds "none in which stupidity reaches a higher degree." Handel sighed, and said, "How can a musician make fine music when he has no good words: there is no soul in the poetry, and it is painful to have to set such stuff to music."[1]

The score of *Nero* is lost, but the libretto, which is extant, contains seventy-five airs in German. It was only performed three times, the theatre being closed after its third representation. Handel, who had for some time given up playing the second violin, now occupied himself with teaching and occasionally playing the harpsichord at the theatre. He lived a quiet life, worked hard, and refusing all

Life at Hamburg

[1] Chrysander, vol. i. p. 127.

temptations to indulge in pleasure, saved his money, and began those economical habits, which lasted through his life, and by which he was able in after years to do so much for charitable objects. He was now independent of his mother's help. By teaching all day he not only supported himself, but was able to return the money she sent him, and to add something of his own to it.[1]

Jealousy of Keiser

Keiser's envy was excited by Handel's success. He is said to have rearranged the words of *Nero*, and produced it on 5th August 1705 under the title of "*The Roman Embarrassment, or the Noble-minded Octavia*, and in 1706 he produced *Almira* under the title of *His Serene Highness the Secretary, or Almira, Queen of Castilia*. Both of these operas were openly directed against Handel, who, however, had already withdrawn from the theatre. Keiser's compositions were distinguished for justness and depth of expression and originality of form. His harmonies were strong and penetrating. Like Sebastian Bach he had an instinct for instrumentation, and never was tied by conventional customs. Handel was much influenced by him, and never denied the obligations he was under to his genius.[2] In 1707 Keiser and his colleague Drüsicke were forced to give up the management of the theatre, owing to the debts they had contracted, and were succeeded by Saurbrey, who persuaded Handel to compose an opera, *Florindo and Daphne*, (text by Hinsch, a poet not much better than Feustking), which was performed in January and February

Third Opera at Hamburg

[1] It is not known how much Handel was able to charge for lessons. Matheson received from 3 to 6 thaler (9 to 18 shillings) a month for his pupils.

[2] Fétis.

1708. It was however divided into two portions on account of its length. Its score is lost. Handel was in Italy at the time of its performance.

Passion Music

Handel's compositions at Hamburg were not confined to opera. A "Passion" by him was performed during Holy Week, 1704. The text was made by Postel from the nineteenth chapter of St John's Gospel. Matheson was at this time in Holland, and could not take part in it, and some years afterwards mentions it in condemnatory terms. Mainwaring mentions two chests full of cantatas, sonatas, and other music as having been left at Hamburg when Handel went to Italy, but Matheson knew nothing of these. Perhaps the cantatas belonged to the Halle period.

All the Hamburg operas were in the German language, with Italian arias. This mixing of languages seems to have been a regular custom in those days: we shall meet with it again in England. Pieces other than opera were performed in Italian, French, High German and Low German.[1] The reason is not far to seek. The recitative, which told the story, was in the language understood by the audience; while the arias were put into Italian, as a language more suitable for musical treatment.

Handel refuses to be the dependant of a Prince

Handel had wished, even before he left Halle, to complete his studies in Italy. But he had not yet the means for so long and costly a journey. An offer was made in 1705 by Prince Gaston de Medici, brother of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, to take him to Florence, but his sturdy independence of

[1] The writer heard Shakespeare's "Othello" performed at Leipsic in a mixture of German and English in 1884.

character refused to allow him to go as the servant of a prince; if he went, it must be as his own master.

The Prince, with whom he was on very friendly terms, showed him a large collection of Italian music. Handel said he could see nothing in the music which answered the high character his highness had given it; he thought it so indifferent that the singers must be angels to recommend it. On the Prince pressing him to come to a country of so great culture, Handel said he was at a loss to conceive how such great culture should be followed by so little fruit![1]

He remained at Hamburg till 1706, by which time he had saved 200 ducats (about £96) besides having sent remittances to his mother from time to time. He must have worked hard and lived simply to have saved so large a sum in three years.

He goes to Italy on his own resources

Few details are known as to the dates and other circumstances of the Italian tour. Schœlcher thinks that Handel arrived at Florence about the month of July 1706. Mainwaring says that he reached Florence soon after the return of Prince Gaston de Medici, who introduced him at the Court of his brother the Grand Duke of Tuscany; but it is not known when this was. Chrysander considers that he paid a short visit to Florence and then went on to Rome, and that about a dozen solo cantatas were produced by him during this visit, one of which, called *Lucretia*, became very popular; and he re-wrote the overture to *Almira*, adding some dances.

We have definite information that he was at Rome in April 1707, from a psalm for five part chorus, *Dixit*

[1] Mainwaring, "Memoirs."

Dominus (110) which is dated at the end "S. D. G. (Soli Deo Gloria) G. F. Hendel, 1707, 11 d'Aprile, Romæ." In this Psalm he began the practice, which he continued to the end of his life, of dating his compositions. Chrysander says that the double fugue "Tu es sacerdos in æternum" is scarcely possible to perform, and that the part-writing in a long fugue on "Et in secula seculorum, amen," is restless; in fact the whole composition shows that he was not yet completely master of the contrapuntal art. Another Psalm *Nisi Dominus* (127) which he took with him to Italy, seems to date from the Halle period, since it is in the form of a German cantata; and a third, *Laudate pueri Dominum* (113) subscribed "S. D. G.: G. F. H.: 1707 d., 8 July Roma," is a rearrangement for five voices of the same Psalm written in Germany for a single voice.

Chrysander thinks that Handel returned to Florence in July 1707, and remained there till January 1708.

Florence was the original home of opera, for it was here that the little society of savants and musicians, meeting at the house of Bardi (on which an inscription records the fact), in their endeavours to revive the ancient glories of the Greek drama, were led to the invention of recitative and the aria.

These first opera writers, Peri, Caccini, and Galilei, who flourished about 1600, were now to find a worthy successor in the Saxon, Handel, a century after they had originated the form of art which had flourished so well in Italy. His first effort in Italian opera on Italian soil was *Roderigo* or *Rodrigo*, the text of which was provided by a poet whose name is now lost. The singers were four sopranos, one alto, and one tenor.

First Opera in Italy

The overture is in the usual form, beginning with a slow movement, then a fugue, but it ends with a suite of dances, consisting of a gigue (so exactly like Corelli's music that it might be mistaken for his), a saraband, a "matelot" or sailor's dance, a minuet, two bourrées, and finally a passacaille, with a brilliant violin solo in the style of Corelli, and very florid passages for all the violoncellos.

Some of the music is taken from *Almira*, but a good deal altered. Like the latter, *Roderigo* affords plenty of opportunity for scenic effect, and the work abounds in brilliant violin and violoncello solos.

To represent Esilena's constancy, she is made at the words "La mia constanza," to sustain the note E through five and three-quarter bars of common time to an elaborate accompaniment.

In scene 4 Handel repeats the device already used in *Almira*, of accompanying a song with violins, flutes and viola, without any bass instrument; and in scene 5 Roderigo is accompanied by violas and basses only. In scene 6 he produces a mysterious ghostly effect by a modulation from the key of A flat to that of C flat, then A flat minor, which keys were not available on the harpsichord, owing to the system of tuning then in use. The cembalist is accordingly directed to cease playing, and the strings alone play the accompaniment at this point.

There seems to have been no trumpeter in Florence, for in a song containing the words *Già grida la tromba*, "Now sounds the trumpet," Handel's favourite instrument, the oboe, takes the place of the trumpet. That he could write for the trumpet at this time is proved by the score of *Almira*; and he is not likely to have lost so

good an opportunity of using this brilliant instrument, if one was available.

The work was awaited with some prejudice by the Italians; he had not as yet given them any proof of his powers, and he himself seems to have confessed in later years to Mainwaring that he was not at that time fully master of the Italian style. But the audience received it exceedingly favourably, and the Grand Duke gave him 100 sequins (about £50) and a service of plate as a mark of his approval.

The principal part in *Rodrigo* was sung by Vittoria Tesi, who, according to Mainwaring, seems to have fallen in love with the young composer, and to have obtained leave of absence in order to follow him to Venice, where she took part in his *Agrippina*.[1]

Prince Gaston, who had met Handel at Hamburg, and had, as we have seen, proposed to take him to Florence in a dependant position, seems to have borne him no ill-will for his refusal of the offer, for we read that he entertained him at Florence in the capacity of a guest. From Florence Handel went to Venice, probably arriving there in January 1708. Here he met Steffani, Domenico Scarlatti, Gasparini, and Lotti. He composed the opera *Agrippina* for the theatre of St Chrysostom[2] in three weeks, and Mainwaring tells us that it was received with great favour, the audience shouting *Viva il caro Sassone*, "Long live the dear Saxon." The French horn, which had lately been invented in France, was introduced into Italy in this

Second Opera in Italy

[1] See Glossary, "Tesi."

[2] There were about half a dozen theatres in Venice, all of which were named after saints.

opera. Mainwaring says, "It is, I believe, an undoubted fact that French horns were never used in Italy as an accompaniment to the voice until Handel introduced them." But no part is found for them in the score.

A story is told that Handel being at a masked ball sat down at the harpsichord; that Scarlatti, on hearing him play, said, "It must be the famous Saxon or the devil"; and being thus discovered, Handel was begged to compose an opera. But, as Chrysander points out, it is scarcely likely that Handel, who was seeking reputation and profit, would introduce himself in this way. His skill on the harpsichord caused much admiration and astonishment among the Italians, some of the more superstitious of whom attributed it to magic; and it is not impossible that Handel, being present at a masked ball, may have been asked to play without discovering himself to the audience.

The characters in *Agrippina* are eight in number: Agrippina, wife of Claudio, soprano; Nero, soprano; Poppœa, soprano; Claudio, the emperor, bass; Ottone, alto; two Freedmen, bass and alto; Juno, alto. There is no tenor.

The overture made a considerable sensation from its fullness and dignity, the Italian overtures being of a much lighter character. A chorus occurs in Act II, accompanied by trumpets, drums, and the usual strings, and one of Otho's songs has a Bach-like accompaniment of flutes and muted violins, while the basses play pizzicato throughout.

Two solo violoncellos are employed in the last Act, which ends with a set of dances. Some of the music was afterwards used for *Jephtha*, *Triumph of Time and Truth*, and *Judas Maccabæus*. An aria, sung by *Agrip-*

pina, afterwards used in *La Resurrezione*, was accompanied by violins in unison with the voice, and without any bass, *i.e.* unison throughout, became enormously popular, and was brought to England, introduced without Handel's name into the opera *Pyrrhus* by A. Scarlatti, and finally published in an English song collection to the words—

"In Kent so fam'd of old,
Close by the famous knoll
A swain a goddess told
An am'rous story."

This air, which was the first piece of music by Handel to reach England, was attributed to Scarlatti.

The Venetian audience was so carried away by the force and beauty of the music that to an onlooker they would have appeared to have lost their senses. At every pause in the music the theatre resounded with cries of "Viva il caro Sassone," and other extravagant expressions. The grandeur and dignity of his style entirely astonished them. The Prince of Hanover, Ernest Augustus, together with a number of important Hanoverian and English personages, happened to be in Venice at the time: and they, equally carried away by the music, pressed him to visit Hanover and England.

Chapter III

Rome—The "Arcadians"—Ottoboni's Academy—*La Resurrezione*—Contest with Scarlatti—Attempt to convert Handel to the Roman Faith—*Il Trionfo del Tempo*—Handel leaves Rome for Naples—*Aci, Galatea, e Polifemo*—Boschi, the bass singer—Handel's social life at Naples—Leaves Naples for Rome—Leaves Rome for Venice—Goes to Hanover, and thence to London.

THREE months were spent at Venice, and on April 4th, 1708, Handel was again in Rome.

We have seen how Italian opera arose in Florence through the efforts of a small society of enthusiasts to revive the ancient Greek drama in a modern form. These learned and artistic societies were not uncommon in Italy during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The Arcadians

In 1690 an "Academy" of poets, savants and musicians was founded at Rome for the cultivation of poetry and music, under the name of "Arcadia," the members being called Arcadian Shepherds, and having names such as Olinto, Almiride, Egeria, etc., assigned to them. Among them were Marchese Ruspoli, afterwards Prince of Cervetri, and his wife Isabella, who was a "shepherdess"; the priest, Crescimbeni, who wrote the history of the Arcadians; Countess Capizucchi; the poet Stampiglia, and Cardinal Paolucci.

Membership of the Academy was not confined to the inhabitants of Rome, but was spread throughout Italy,

and at one time numbered 1500. It included several of the popes, all the cardinals, many foreign princes, the Queen of Poland, and other ladies of high position; the musicians Corelli, A. Scarlatti, Pasquini, Marcello, the German poet Postel, and an Englishman, Daniel Lock.

Ottoboni's Academy

There was another "Academy" at Rome presided over by Cardinal Ottoboni, in whose palace the members met weekly for the practice of extemporaneous poetry and music, under the leadership of Corelli, who was an intimate friend of Ottoboni, with whom he lived.

No opera was permitted at this time in Rome, but every other kind of music was cultivated by the two Academies. The performers were the best artists available, and Ottoboni, besides sustaining an orchestra, had command of the papal choir. He was a man of great wealth, which he spent in employing the best artists, and in succouring the poor.

Handel was received with open arms by the Arcadians, though, as he had not yet reached his twenty-fourth year, he could not become a member; for the rules of the society prescribed this as necessary for membership. He was at once introduced to the Ottoboni Academy, and here all the works he composed at Rome were performed.

An Italian Oratorio

He seems to have been the guest of the Marquis of Ruspoli. His oratorio *La Resurrezione* is dated "Roma la Festa di Pasque dal Marchese Ruspoli 11 d'Aprile 1708." The author of the words is unkown.

It contains parts for two flutes, two German flutes, two bassoons, two trumpets, harpsichord, viola da gamba, theorbo, archlute, and string quartet. A "song of angels"

is accompanied by four violins. It was first performed at Cardinal Ottoboni's Academy.

Contest with Domenico Scarlatti

Domenico Scarlatti[1] happened to be in Rome at this time, and at the instance of Cardinal Ottoboni a competition took place between him and Handel. On the organ Handel was declared the conqueror, while the contest was doubtful with regard to the harpsichord. D. Scarlatti was undoubtedly one of the finest harpsichord players of the day, but from this time, whenever he was praised for his playing, "he would mention Handel, and cross himself in token of admiration."[2] The two musicians retained the greatest esteem for each other throughout their lives, in spite of the contest. It will be remembered that Marchand fled from the proposed contest with Bach, but that Bach was generous enough never to willingly refer to the event. Handel and Bach had in common that lofty spirit of generosity which is found in most composers of the first rank. They were both too great to be influenced by the petty jealousies and rivalries that are so frequently found amongst musicians of a less calibre.

Efforts to convert Handel to the Roman Faith

In Rome attempts were made to convert Handel to the Roman religion—perhaps by his friend Pamphili. He was asked whether he had ever considered the origin and creed of the Lutheran religion, or of the one true Church; for this is a matter of salvation, of more importance than our life and all our works. Handel frankly answered that he had neither the calling nor the ability to make independent researches into the differences

[1] Son of Alessandro.

[2] Mainwaring.

of Church teaching, but he assured his interlocutor that he was firmly resolved to continue all his life as a member of that Church in whose bosom he had been born and brought up. The religion of Luther exactly suited strong characters such as those of Handel and Bach, and their music is throughout influenced by it. It is satisfactory to note that these theological differences in no way disturbed the friendly relations that existed between Handel and the Church authorities at Rome.

The Second Italian Oratorio

Shortly after the production of *La Resurrezione*, he composed *Il Trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno*, which, nearly thirty years later, he worked up into the English oratorio, *The Triumph of Time and Truth.* The characters were: Bellezza, Beauty; Piacere, Pleasure; Tempo, Time; and Disinganno, Counsel. The text, which treated of the temptations caused by the two former characters, and their subordination by the two latter, was written for him by Cardinal Pansili. It was called a "Serenata," since the words were not taken from Scripture. It contains two quartets, an unusual combination of voices in those days.

Corelli and Handel's Music

The vigorous character of the music was new to the Italians, and Corelli complained of its difficulty, especially with regard to the overture. Handel having tried in vain to get him to give the requisite fire and strength to the music, snatched the violin out of his hand, and played the passages himself, to show the company how little Corelli understood them. Poor Corelli, of a shy and retiring disposition, confessed that he could not understand the matter, and he had not the requisite power. "But, my

dear Saxon," said he, "this music is in the French style, which I do not understand." Thereupon Handel composed a "symphony" in the Italian style, in place of the overture. Hawkins tells us that Handel was competent at any time to take a violin from the hands of a player and show him how he wished the passages performed.

He was on intimate terms with Cardinal Pansili, who wrote words for several secular cantatas which he set to music, but these works are lost. Among them is a poem on Handel himself comparing him to Orpheus.

Handel was completely happy in the society of the Arcadian Shepherds at Rome, though he was never elected a member; but his stay was cut short by political exigencies. Trouble had for some time been brewing between the Pope, Clement XI., and the Emperor of Austria on account of the Spanish succession, and the Pope had walled up eight out of the eighteen gates of Rome. As an army was now advancing against the city, Handel departed in June 1708 to escape being besieged. He travelled to Naples, and found German troops everywhere in Neapolitan territory. That he was very sorry to leave, is shown by a MS., "Partenza di G. B. Cantata di G. F. Hendel," the words of which are a lamentation over the fate that drives him from the beautiful banks of the Tiber.

Handel goes to Naples through a war-ridden territory

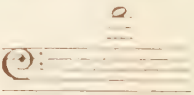
Chrysander says that it is more than probable that the two Scarlattis and Corelli travelled with him to Naples. Alessandro Scarlatti was at that time capellmeister at Sta. Maria Maggiore in Rome, and on resigning this

post he became head of the Conservatorio at Naples, where he founded the famous Neapolitan school of opera.

A chamber trio, *Se tu non lasci amore*, signed "G. F. Handel, li 12 Luglio 1708, Napoli," shows that he was at Naples in July, and all authorities are agreed that he here wrote the Italian serenata, *Aci, Galattea, e Polifemo*,[1] which is really a cantata for three voices and orchestra, without chorus, overture, or division into acts.

Aci, Galattea, e Polifemo

The introductory duet is accompanied by two violoncellos and a double bass. The part of Polifemo was written for a bass singer of extraordinary compass, since the music comprises a range of two octaves and five notes; and even a greater compass is found in the solo cantata, *Nell' Africane selve*, where the singer has to leap

from to

Chrysander thinks that the remarkable bass for whom these two works were written was Boschi, who afterwards sang in London. Burney says "Handel's genius and fire never shone finer than in the bass songs which he composed for Boschi, whose voice being sufficiently powerful to penetrate through a multiplicity of musical parts, Handel set every engine to work in the orchestra to enrich

[1] This is the title of the MS. The second name is spelled "Galathea" by Fétis.

the harmony, and enliven the movement." According to Mainwaring, a palace, with free board, was placed at Handel's disposal, together with carriages and every convenience, by a wealthy lady, Donna Laura, and he was very much sought after by members of the best society, who considered themselves fortunate when they were able to entertain him. This Donna Laura seems to have been a Spanish lady, for amongst the Italian cantatas is found one for voice and guitar in the Spanish language.

Life at Naples

The dates and times of Handel's sojourns at the various Italian towns can only be guessed at by reference to such of his works as have come down to us in their original form complete, and with the dates and places of their composition given on them. He seems to have left Naples in the autumn of 1709.

Amongst the works composed there are seven French cazonets with harpsichord accompaniment which were written more as studies in the French style than for performance. They contain many corrections and improvements in pencil and ink.

About Christmas 1709 he was in Rome again for the third time. Here he heard the Calabrian Pifferari, who every year come to Rome to celebrate the birth of Christ by singing and playing an ancient melody in memory of their predecessors, the shepherds of Bethlehem. This melody was years afterwards employed by Handel in the *Messiah* under the name of the "Pastoral Symphony," over which he wrote "Pif," *i.e.* Pifferari.[1] He also performed *Aci* here.

Again in Rome.

Origin of the Pastoral Symphony in the "Messiah"

[1] Pifferare, It. : to play the fife.

Leaving Rome he went to Venice "in search of employment," where he arrived during the Carnival in 1710. Here he made the acquaintance of Baron Kielmannsegge and Capellmeister Steffani,[1] who persuaded him to go to Hanover, though he wished to go to England.[2] On his arrival he was recommended by his two friends to the Elector of Brunswick, afterwards George I. of England, as capellmeister. The Abbé Steffani is said to have resigned his post of capellmeister in Handel's favour. Schœlcher points out that a Roman Catholic abbé could not have held such a post in a Lutheran establishment. Fétis says, "The Duke of Brunswick had entrusted the direction of his theatre to Steffani, but the quarrels among the singers caused him to beg for his dismissal. . . . He had taken high rank among politicians, and, in 1710, he left his posts of capellmeister and director of music, designating Handel as his successor, after which he lived as a courtier in the society of the great." All this goes against Schœlcher's argument. Art is more cosmopolitan than religion, and princes were wise enough to see that theological differences made no difference in the musicianship of a man. Our own Tallis held his post under four sovereigns—Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary and Elizabeth—at a time when the rival theologians were burning and imprisoning each other to their heart's content.

Handel leaves Italy

Capellmeister to the Elector of Hanover

[1] See Glossary.

[2] *Vide* A. Reissmann, G. F. Händel, 1882, p. 41. The dates and facts differ from Schœlcher, p. 25, who says he went to Germany in 1709, and visited Hanover without having definitely decided on which town to fix.

Second Appointment

The following is Handel's account of the transaction, given in his own words to Hawkins: "When I first arrived at Hanover I was a young man, under twenty; I was acquainted with the merits of Steffani, and he had heard of me.[1] I understood somewhat of music, and," putting forth both his broad hands, and extending his fingers, "could play pretty well on the organ. He received me with great kindness, and took an early opportunity to introduce me to the Princess Sophia and the Elector's son, giving them to understand that I was what he pleased to call a virtuoso in music; he obliged me with instructions for my conduct and behaviour during my residence at Hanover, and being called from the city to attend to matters of a public concern, he left me in possession of that favour and patronage which he himself had enjoyed for a series of years."

Handel's salary at Hanover was fifteen hundred ducats, about £300. Bach's salary at this time was £15, 13s. 3d.; such was the difference between the income of a rising church musician and that of a rising composer of operas. Handel at once obtained leave of absence in order to go to England, but he first paid a visit to his mother and Zachau at Halle. Here he found that his youngest sister, Johanna Christiana, had died in 1709, at the age of twenty; his elder sister Dorothea Sophia had married a barrister, Dr Michael Dieterich Michaelsen, who later became a member of the Prussian War Office. Mainwaring says that his mother had become blind, but this is an error, for she retained her sight for another twenty years.

Visits Halle

[1] They had met at Venice. Handel is too modest to say "he had heard me."

Goes to London

From Halle he travelled to Dusseldorf, where he was the guest of the Elector John William, of the Pfalz, who presented him with a silver table service. From here he journeyed through Holland to London, arriving there in the autumn of 1710.

Chapter IV

The condition of opera in England—The public demand for something better—Handel produces *Rinaldo*—Thomas Britton, the small coal man—Handel returns to Hanover—The Opera at Hanover—Handel obtains leave of absence—Produces *Il Pastor Fido* in London—His life at Burlington House—*Teseo*—*Ode for the Birthday of Queen Anne*—"*Utrecht*" *Te Deum and Jubilate*—Coronation of George I.

Condition of Dramatic Music in London

Opera had grown out of the Masque in England through the genius of Henry Purcell, whose recitative, "no less rhetorically perfect than Lulli's, was infinitely more natural, and frequently impassioned to the last degree: and his airs, despite his self-confessed admiration for the Italian style, show little trace of the forms then most in vogue, but breathing rather the spirit of unfettered national melody, stand forth as models of refinement and freedom."[1]

Purcell wrote no less than thirty-nine operas: but they were not operas in the complete sense of the term, since they were in reality dramas with musical scenes intermingled. Hence Chrysander always refers to them as "Half-operas." But Purcell had no successor of his calibre to carry on the work. He died in 1695, and music in London was for some years chiefly confined to

1 W. S. Rockstro in "Dictionary of Music and Musicians" (Grove), vol. ii. p. 507.

"Concerts" of vocal and instrumental music, Italian "Intermezzi, or interludes, and mimical entertainments of singing and dancing," performed by Italian and English musicians. In 1704 a musical entertainment, "after the manner of an opera," called *Britain's Happiness*, was performed at Drury Lane Theatre,[1] the vocal part of which was composed by John Weldon, afterwards organist and composer of the Chapel Royal, the instrumental part by Charles Dieupart, a French violinist and cembalist. This work was also performed at the same time at the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre, with music by Leveridge, a bass singer. In the same year Matthew Lock's opera *Psyche*, and John Banister's *Circe* were revived. These attempts were not in themselves very successful, but they prepared the British public for Italian opera, which was now "stealing into England, but in as rude a disguise as possible, in a lame hobbling translation, with false quantities, sung by our own unskilful voices, with graces misapplied to almost every sentiment, and with action lifeless and unmeaning through every character."[2]

[1] The theatres in London were—(1) in Drury Lane; (2) in the Haymarket, called the Queen's, or King's, or the Great Theatre, or the Opera House; (3) in the Haymarket, called the Little Theatre; (4) a theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields; and (5) in Covent Garden, a new house opened on December 7th, 1732, by John Rich. Other places of public entertainment at which Handel's music was performed were Marylebone Gardens; Ranelagh Gardens, with a large Rotunda, having a band-stand in the centre; and Vauxhall, afterwards known as Spring Gardens.

[2] Colley Cibber, quoted by Burney, "History of Music," vol. iv. p. 198.

English Opera

In January 1705, *Arsinoe, Queen of Cyrus*, by Stanzani, which had first been performed at Bologna in 1677, was set to English words by Thomas Clayton, and performed at Drury Lane by English singers "after the Italian manner." The music seems to have been composed by Clayton. Burney says that "not only the common rules of musical composition are violated in every song, but also the prosody and accents of our language. The translation is wretched; but it is rendered much more absurd by the manner in which it is set to music. Indeed, the English must have hungered and thirsted extremely after dramatic music at this time to be attracted and amused by such trash." It had a run of twenty-four nights.

In 1706 *Camilla*, by Stampiglio, was adapted in the same manner by Owen MacSwiney, and performed, with a run of nine nights, at Drury Lane, the singers being the same as in *Arsinoe;* and at the Haymarket Theatre, Sir John Vanbrugh and Mr Congreve gave a translated opera, *The Temple of Love*, set to "Italian music" by Greber, a German. It was worse than the previous attempts, and, being only performed twice, was succeeded by Durfey's comic opera, *The Wonders of the Sun*. In 1707 *Camilla* was revived at Drury Lane, and was sufficiently attractive to damage the fortunes of the ordinary English plays. In the same year Addison, who had been in Italy, employed Clayton to set his opera *Rosamond* to music, which was performed three times at Drury Lane, and the atrocious character of the music caused it never to be performed again. It was succeeded by *Thomyris, Queen of Scythia*, written by Motteux, and "adjusted" to airs by Bononcini and Scarlatti by Doctor Pepusch. The English portions

were sung by English performers, the Italian by an artificial soprano, Valentini Urbani, and Signora de l'Epine. Its music was the best that had yet been heard.

Italian singers were now beginning to pour into England, and the public, after having been regaled for so many years on the poorest of music, was ripe for something better. In January 1708, the *London Daily Post* announced that "by agreement between Swiney and Rich, the Haymarket is to be appropriated to operas, and Drury Lane to plays. *Love's Triumph*, by Ottoboni, the English words "adjusted" to the airs of Carlo C. Giovanni by Motteux, and with choruses and dances after the French manner, was tried, to see if the English audience preferred French or Italian music. It had no success. Scarlatti's *Pyrrhus and Demetrius*, translated by MacSwiney and arranged by Haym, followed; it had a considerable success, perhaps owing to the appearance in it of an artificial soprano, Nicolini Grimaldi, a great Neapolitan singer, but a still greater actor. The promoters of Italian opera may now be considered to have succeeded in firmly establishing it on English soil. The taste of the public was improving, and there was a growing demand for better music.

As in Hamburg the operas were performed in a mixture of Italian and German, so in London these first performances were in Italian and English. Busby calls these polyglot operas "gallimaufries."

In January 1710, *Almahide*, an opera by an unknown composer, was performed entirely in Italian, and on May 3rd, *Hydaspes*, by Mancini, was performed in Italian "with English singing between the acts."

First London Opera

The advent of Italian opera was strongly opposed by Steele and Addison, who attacked it with all the power of their sarcasm and wit. Addison, in the *Spectator*, having abused the "confusion of tongues" in the early operas, now began to talk of the taste for performances in which not a word could be understood. "Amateurs, tired with only understanding half the piece, found it more convenient not to understand any." "It does not," says he, "want any measure of sense to see the ridicule of this monstrous practice."

Opposition to the introduction of Italian Opera

Addison's *Spectator* and Steele's *Tatler* could not stem the rising tide—it is possible that they even helped the movement by calling attention to it; for many an undertaking is pushed forward as much by the attacks of its enemies as by the exertions of its promoters. Moreover, the English opera, *Rosamond*, by Addison and Clayton, produced at Drury Lane in 1707, had proved a failure; and Burney thinks that the hostility evinced by the *Spectator* was a deliberate attempt to conceal the failure.

A composer who had made himself famous throughout Italy was now visiting London, and his presence was at once taken advantage of to provide something better than the London public had yet experienced.

The director of the Haymarket Theatre, the poet Aaron Hill, arranged a book in English out of Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, and engaged Giacomo Rossi to translate it into Italian, and Handel to set it to music. The latter went to work with his usual furious enthusiasm, and the poor poet could not keep pace with him. The music was written

Handel's First Opera in London

in a fortnight, and Rossi complains that "Signor Hendel, the Orpheus of our century, in setting it to music, has hardly given him time to write it." The success was enormous. An air, *Cara sposa*, sung by Nicolini, was considered by the composer to be one of the best he ever made; and Walsh, the publisher, made fifteen hundred pounds by the publication of this opera, which was called *Rinaldo*.[1]

The first performance took place on February 24, 1711, and its success roused the anger of Steele and Addison. Unusual care and expense was lavished on the stage arrangements and machinery. The gardens of Armida were filled with live birds, which Addison contemptuously called sparrows. It was played fifteen nights in succession, a rare thing in those days. The part of *Rinaldo* was written for Nicolini, whose voice, formerly a soprano, had now become a contralto. Hill dedicated the work to Queen Anne. The air "Cara sposa" was played on all the harpsichords in England. The march became the regimental march of the Life Guards for forty years, and twenty years later was adapted by Pepusch to the Robbers' Chorus in the *Beggars' Opera*. A piece in the second act was sung in all merrymakings to the words, "Let the waiter bring clean glasses"; and the air "Lascia che io pianga" is still popular. With reference to the £1500 gained by Walsh, Handel is said to have proposed that Walsh should compose the next opera, and that he (Handel) should sell it, in order that they might be on a more equal footing. The work afterwards reached Italy

[1] The "publication" of an opera in those days usually only meant the publication of its favourite songs, with figured bass accompaniment. The recitatives were omitted.

(where it was performed at Naple by Leonardo Leo), and Hamburg, and was revived again and again in London.

Return to Hanover

Meanwhile the court and the public were most enthusiastic over Handel's harpsichord and organ playing, and when the time drew near for his return to Hanover, Queen Anne made him promise to come again as soon as possible. He had astonished and delighted everyone by his many-sided genius.

Thomas Britton

The first regular weekly concerts that we hear of in London were those given by Thomas Britton, the small coal man. This extraordinary character made his living by selling coal about the streets, which he carried in sacks on his back—for it was of too small a quality to be carried in a vehicle. When his daily round was finished he went home to his shop near Clerkenwell Green, changed his clothes, and was then ready to receive his company. He was a most enthusiastic collector of music and musical books. He converted the long low loft over his shop into a regular concert-room, in which were all kinds of instruments, including a small organ. For some thirty years this room, which could only be approached by a narrow outside staircase, and was "so mean in every respect as to be only a fit habitation for a very poor man," was the weekly resort of all musical amateurs of whatever wealth or rank, and of all professional musicians. Britton made no charge for his concerts; all who came were his guests. Dukes and duchesses, gentlemen and ladies, musicians and singers, all met on equal terms in the small coal man's loft, to listen to and perform the best chamber music of the day. Handel was a welcome and

frequent performer on the organ here, and here he met all the best musicians of London. Matthew Dubourg, who afterwards was associated with him in the performance of the *Messiah* at Dublin, and who became his chief violinist, made his public *debût* at Thomas Britton's rooms, as a child, standing on a stool, and playing a solo by Corelli. Handel probably first met him here. Besides the organ Handel used to play the harpsichord at Britton's room. In this he had a rival in William Babell, organist to George I., who became his pupil, and did much to spread a knowledge of his clavier music. Amongst it was published by Walsh a "Harpsichord piece" played by Handel in one of the songs in *Rinaldo*, which made a great sensation; but he is supposed to have extemporised it, for in the score are found some blank bars marked "Cembalo."

Visits his Mother

Handel had a very pleasant visit to London. He seems to have left some time after the close of the opera season on June 2nd. He paid a visit to his mother at Halle, where, according to the register of the church of Notre Dame de Laurent, he stood godfather to his neice, Johanna Michaelsen, on June 23, at that church. The infant was called Friederike, perhaps after her uncle and godfather. Handel never ceased to have a special affection for this child of his only living sister, and he made her the principal beneficiary in his will.

The Theatre at Hanover

He now resumed his duties as capellmeister at the Court of Hanover. The theatre was one of the finest in Europe, and it was supported entirely at the cost of the Elector, and no charge was made for admission. In addition to the capellmeister there was attached to the Court a poet,

the Abbé Hortensio Mauro, who was also employed as private secretary, master of the ceremonies, and political agent. Handel composed for Princess Caroline, step-daughter of the Elector, thirteen chamber duets and twelve cantatas, which are printed in Arnold's edition, and he seems to have composed nothing else except his oboe-concertos. Mainwaring says that the words of the twelve cantatas were written by Mauro. His chamber duets bear signs of the influence of his friend Steffani, whose works he studied diligently, and who had considerable influence on his artistic development.

Chamber Duets and Cantatas

Handel was always seeking to perfect himself in his art; wherever he found anything worth learning he set himself diligently to learn it. Except for the few years he studied under Zachau he was his own teacher, simply observing and assimilating all that he could learn from the works of his predecessors. He neither composed nor performed any opera at Hanover, and he did not remain there long. He had seen during his visit to London that this was the right place in which to exercise his talents, and, unable to longer resist the pressing invitations he received, backed by his own ardent wishes, he obtained leave of absence "on condition that he engaged to return within a reasonable time." How he interpreted this condition will be seen in due course.

Handel again obtains leave of absence

In November 1712 he was again in London. The opera was now under the management of MacSwiney, who engaged Handel to write *Il Pastor fido*. He finished it on November 4th, 1712, and it was produced on the 21st of the same

Il Pastor fido

month. The author of the libretto was Rossi, who dedicated it to the "Most illustrious Lady Anna Cartwright." The prices of the seats were "as usual"—boxes, 8s.; pit, 5s.; gallery, 2s. 6d. Nicolini had left England, and his place was taken by Cavaliere Valeriano Pellegrini, an artificial soprano; the other parts being sung by Leveridge, Signora de l'Epine, Mrs Barbier a contralto, and Signora Schiavonetti. The opera was sung entirely in Italian. It failed to please, and was withdrawn in February after only six performances.

Life in London

Handel, being only on a visit to London, and with no assured position, did not as yet settle down. He was the guest at this time of a Mr Andrews, of Barn Elms, in Surrey, who also had a house in town. After living with Mr Andrews for a year, he yielded to the pressing invitation of the Earl of Burlington, who had recently built a fine house in Piccadilly, now the Royal Academy, to stay with him, and here he remained no less than three years. He had full liberty to make any disposal of his time that suited him, and we read that "he was very regular and uniform in his habits. He worked in his study every morning till the dinner hour, when he sat down with men of the first eminence for genius and abilities of any in the kingdom," who were, like himself, guests of Lord Burlington. He thus became acquainted with Pope, Gay, and Arbuthnot, the last of whom afterwards befriended him with his pen when he was being severely handled by his enemies. In the afternoons he would frequently attend service at St Paul's Cathedral, of which Brind was then organist. The organ, by "Father Smith," was comparatively new, and he was particularly pleased with its tone. Moreover, it had

pedals, a very unusual circumstance at that time. On this organ Handel used to play the concluding voluntaries, and many persons were attracted by his performances. He would then often adjourn to the Queen's Arms Tavern in St Paul's Churchyard, with members of the choir. Here was a large room with a harpsichord, and he would sometimes remain there making music for the whole evening. On other evenings, if there was no opera in progress, he would assist at the concerts at Burlington House, in which his own music took a large place.[1] Such was his daily life during this his second visit to London.

Maurice Greene

Maurice Greene, who afterwards became Professor of Music to the University of Cambridge and Master of the King's Music, was at that time articled to Brind, and became a great admirer of Handel, even going so far as to blow the organ, in order to enjoy the pleasure of hearing him play. He constantly went to see him at Burlington House, and afterwards at Canons, so that his visits became more frequent than welcome. Handel, however, bore with him, until he found that Greene was paying the same attentions to Bononcini, whereupon he refused any longer to receive him. We shall meet with Greene later.[2]

[1] "History of Music," Hawkins.

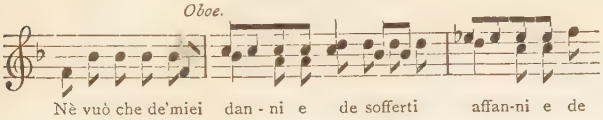
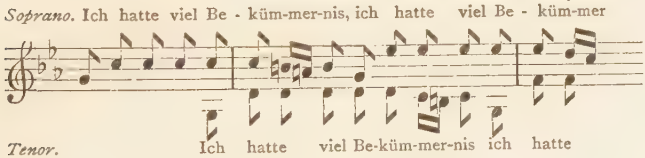
[2] There is a good anecdote relating to Maurice Greene and Handel which, if not complimentary to Greene, at least shows the ready wit of the "Saxon giant." One day Greene took coffee with Handel, having previously left the MS. of an anthem for the great German's approval. A variety of subjects were discussed, but not a word said by Handel concerning the composition. At length Greene whose patience was exhausted, said, with eagerness and anxiety which he

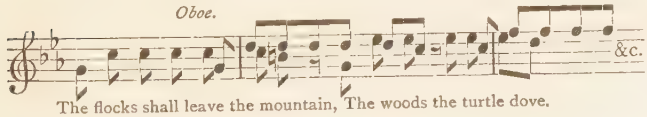
Il Pastor Fido was followed by a five-act opera, *Teseo*, on January 10th, 1713, "with raised prices." The libretto was written by Haym, and dedicated to Lord Burlington. The work is on a far larger scale than its predecessor. It was finished on December 19, 1712, and was rehearsed and put on the stage in twenty-one days. All the dresses were new, as were the scenery, machines, and decorations. The house was well filled, and the first performances were very successful; but even at this early stage financial troubles began to afflict operatic enterprise, and they seem to have been inseparable from Italian opera throughout its history. MacSwiney, the director of the theatre, had to fly from his creditors, and the singers had to take their chance of making what they could by further performances on their own account, dividing the proceeds amongst themselves. Handel went without his fee, but was to some extent indemnified by a performance on May 16th "for the benefit of Mr Hendel, with an entertainment for the harpsichord." The "entertainment for the harpsichord" seems afterwards to have become a regular feature between the acts of both opera and oratorio, and several of Handel's concertos were written for this purpose.

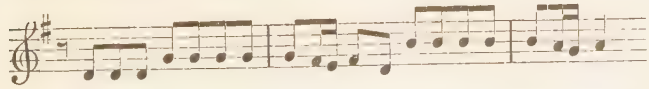
Teseo

could no longer conceal: "Well, sir, but my anthem—what do you think of it?" "Oh! your antum. Ah! I did tink dat it vanted air." "Air," said Greene. "Yes, air; and so I did hang it out of de vindow," replied Handel.—"Musical Anecdotes," v. 1 (Crowest). This story, which is told by Busby, is discredited by the best authorities (Schoelcher, Chrysander, Rockstro) on the ground that not only does it contain a foolish pun, but the gratuitous insult is entirely contrary to what is known of Handel's kindly nature.

A Coincidence

One of the chief arias in *Teseo* (1713) contains the following theme—

J. S. Bach has, in a church cantata, composed 1714—

Handel, in *Acis and Galatea* (1720), has—



Bach, in an organ fugue, composed in 1724 or 1725, has the theme—

Handel has frequently been accused of appropriating the musical ideas of others to his own use; of stealing them in fact. Did Bach in this case steal from Handel? We shall refer to this subject in a later chapter.

Birthday Ode and Te Deum

Two important works, with English words, next claim our attention. An *Ode for the Birthday of Queen Anne* and a *Te Deum and Jubilate*. The first was performed on February 6th, 1713, probably at St James's Palace on the forty-ninth birthday of the Queen; the author of the words is unknown. It praises Queen Anne for bringing about the Peace of Utrecht. It consists of short choruses, solos, and duets. Some of the music was afterwards used in *Deborah*, and one of the movements is taken almost note for note from an oboe concerto. The sixth chorus contains the germ of part of the Hallelujah Chorus in the *Messiah*.

At the same time Handel composed a *Te Deum and Jubilate* on the model of that of Purcell (which was performed every year at the festival of the sons of the clergy at St Paul's) in order to be ready in case an occasion arose for it. It was completed on January 14th, 1713. At that time the English statute required that the chief musician of the Court should be a native. The holder of the post was John Eccles, and it was part of his duty to supply any music that was required for State functions. But Queen Anne overrode the law. She commissioned Handel to prepare his *Te Deum* for the celebration of the Peace of Utrecht. This peace was signed on March 31st, 1713, and on July 7th the Queen went from Windsor to St James's Palace to return thanks to God for the blessings of peace. The *Utrecht Te Deum and Jubilate* were probably performed at St Paul's Cathedral on the day of thanksgiving. Queen Anne did not love the Hanoverian Court, yet such was her appreciation of art that she rewarded the Hanoverian capellmeister with a pension

for life of £200. As he was already in receipt of £300 a year from the Court of Hanover, and was at no expense for board and lodging, he must have been in very comfortable circumstances for a bachelor. To what uses he put the money he was able to earn will appear in the course of this narrative.

Leave of absence outstayed

Finding life very pleasant and profitable in London, Handel outstayed his leave of absence, and indeed seems to have made up his mind never to return to Hanover.

He was living and working practically in the country, yet within an easy walk of London. Lord Burlington's love of solitude had caused him to build his house "in the middle of the fields, where no one would come and build beside him." Gay refers to the "Fair Palace of Piccadilly, in *Trivia* :

> "There Hendel strikes the strings, the melting strain
> Transports the soul and thrills through every vein,
> There oft I enter."

All that was expected of Handel in return for the hospitality given him was that he should conduct the Earl's concerts, and this comfortable arrangement might have gone on for some time but for the death of Queen Anne on August 1st, 1714. She was succeeded by Handel's employer, the Elector of Hanover, who was about to be crowned at Westminster with the title of George the First of England. Handel carefully avoided the Elector. Not only had he broken his engagement, but in composing the "Utrecht" *Te Deum* he had given further offence, because the Treaty of Utrecht was not liked in Germany.

Chapter V

The Elector of Hanover becomes George I. of England—Handel dares not meet him—*Silla*—*Amadigi*—Parody on *Amadigi*—*Water Music*—Handel is received by George I.—A letter to Matheson—Handel goes to Hanover with the King—Meets J. C. Smith—Returns to England and becomes Capellmeister at Canons—*Esther Acis and Galatea*—The Harmonious Blacksmith Legends—Death of Handel's sister—He is engaged by the Royal Academy of Music.

Arrival of George I.

THE Elector landed at Greenwich on September 18th, 1714, and was crowned at Westminster Abbey on October 20th. Handel must have looked on with some fear for his future prospects. For a servant to absent himself without leave from a court was, in those days, an unpardonable offence; and a capellmeister was, as we have seen, in the position of a servant, who once having accepted office could not even resign during his lifetime, without permission from his employer. Handel had now been some two years in London. He had long overstepped the "reasonable time" for which he was given leave of absence. He had accepted a pension from Queen Anne, who was bitterly opposed to the Hanoverian succession, and who had taken no pains to conceal her aversion; he had provided a splendid piece of music for a Tory celebration, which was entirely distasteful to the Whigs, the supporters of the Hanoverian dynasty. He therefore

carefully abstained from presenting himself at Court, and continued his quiet retired life at Burlington House. He composed a small opera called *Silla* which was never performed in public; Chrysander suggests that it may have been performed privately at Burlington House, but there is no record of the matter. Schœlcher thinks it was written at Rome; but there was no opera-house at Rome in those days, and Handel was not the man to waste time in composing anything that had not a reasonable chance of being performed. A copy of *Silla* in the British Museum (Add. MSS. 5334) is superscribed "an opera by Gio. Bononcini." Handel's original MS. is at Buckingham Palace. Its small compass, and the little significance of the songs are suggestive of its having been written for amateurs of no great skill.

Silla

The theatre was carried on by Heidegger, a remarkable man something of a poet, a capable manager, and the ugliest man in London. On this account his portrait was frequently engraved, under the name of the "Swiss Count." Lord Chesterfield made a bet that no one so ugly could be found in London, but after a search, an old woman was discovered, and Heidegger was declared to be the handsomer of the two. But Lord Chesterfield won his bet by insisting on Heidegger's putting on the old woman's bonnet, when he appeared uglier than ever.

Heidegger

Heidegger gave ten performances of *Rinaldo* this season which were attended by the Prince and Princess of Wales, and arranged or wrote the libretto for a new opera by Handel, to be called *Amadigi*. The libretto is dedicated to the Earl of Burlington, because the music was composed in his house.

Amadigi

Much of the music of *Silla* is used in it, but in a more developed form.

The parts were sung by Nicolini, Signora Vico, Schiavonetti, and Anastasia Robinson, a young English singer of great reputation, who afterwards became the wife of the Earl of Peterborough.

The plot of the opera turns on the love of Melissa, a sorceress, for Amadigi, who, finding that in spite of her machinations, her rival Oriana is preferred by her lover, kills herself. A rival of Amadigi, Dardanus, also dies, and reappears as a ghost. The opera ends with a chorus in gavotte form, which is afterwards repeated by the instruments alone, during a dance on the stage. The new opera was produced at the Haymarket on May 25th, 1715, with great splendour. We learn that in consequence of the unusual amount of machinery and scenes employed, no persons, even the subscribers, were allowed to go behind the scenes on account of the danger they might incur. Amongst the novelties was a fountain with real water. An orchestral effect which Handel had previously used in *La Resurrezione* at Rome, but was new to the English public, was that of the violins playing in octaves. The popularity of *Amadigi* is attested by the fact that a burlesque called *Amadis*, "with all the sinkings, flyings, and usual decorations" was produced at the Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Origin of the Water Music

The breach between Handel and the King was not suffered to continue long. Baron Kielmannsegge, who was now in England, was the mediator. On August 22, 1715, the King, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and many of the nobility, made a picnic party on the Thames, going

in barges from Whitehall to Limehouse. When they returned in the evening the ships were illuminated with lanterns in their rigging, crowds of boats accompanied the procession, and guns were continually fired. Baron Kielmannsegge here saw his opportunity. He persuaded Handel to compose some music to be performed in a barge which should follow the royal barge. Twenty-five short pieces were supplied by Handel, which became known as the *Water Music*. The orchestra consisted of four violins, one viol, one violoncello, one double-bass, two oboes, two bassoons, two horns, two flageolets, one flute, and one trumpet. The King was much struck with the music, asked who was the composer, and ordered Handel into his presence. He praised the music, forgave the culprit, and bestowed a further pension of £200 a year on him.[1]

Handel is reconciled to the King

The *Daily Courant* of July 19, 1717, gives the following account :—

"On Wednesday evening at about 8, the King took water at Whitehall in an open barge, wherein were also the dutchess of Bolton, the dutchess of Newcastle, the Countess of Godolphin, Madam Kilmanseck, and the Earl of Orkney, and went up the river towards Chelsea. Many other barges with persons of quality attended, and so great a number of boats, that the whole river in a manner was covered: a city company's barge was employed for the musick, wherein were fifty instruments of all sorts, who play'd all the way from Lambeth (while the barges drove with the tide, without rowing, as far as Chelsea), the finest symphonies, composed express for

[1] We may conclude that he was no longer in receipt of the £300 from the Hanoverian Court.

this occasion, by Mr Hendel: which His Majesty liked so well, that he caused it to be played over three times in going and returning. At eleven, His Majesty went ashoar at Chelsea, where a supper was prepared, and then there was another very fine consort of musick which lasted till 2: after which His Majesty came again into his barge, and returned the same way, the musick continuing to play till he landed."

A new appointment

Shortly after this Geminiani, the violinist, being anxious to get the best possible accompanist for a performance before the King, pressed for permission to employ Handel. This was granted under the influence of Kielmannsegge, and it led to the appointment of Handel as music-master to the daughters of the Prince of Wales at a further salary of £200—making, together with Queen Anne's £200 and the King's £200, an income of £600.

Handel seems to have soon been again regularly re-installed in his old place of court musician, for when the King went to Hanover in July Handel went with him.

Another Passion Music

During this visit he set to music Brockes' poem *Der für die Sünden der Welt gemarterte und sterbende Jesus*, which had been set by Keiser in 1712, and later by Telemann and Matheson. Handel's version was performed in Hamburg, probably in 1717. J. S. Bach copied the score, calling it, in an odd mixture of Latin, French and Italian, *Oratorium Passionale: Poesia di Brocks et Musica di Hendel.* His copy has in one place different words from the other copies. The work is in the usual form of recitative, solos, choruses, and a portion of the chorale "Schmücke dich O liebe Seele," "Decorate thyself, my soul," to be sung by

the congregation. Handel's inveterate habit of utilising old work for new compositions led him to incorporate the music of the prayer in Gethsemane, "Mein Vater, ist möglich, so lass den Kelch vorübergehen," into Haman's prayer to the Queen for pity in *Esther*: a proceeding for which, as Chrysander says, "no one can praise him." Much of the music is taken from his previous works, and most of what is new was utilised for later works, *Esther*, *Debora*, and the opera *Julius Cæsar*.

His old friend Matheson took the opportunity of his being in Germany to write several letters to him on the subject of his book *Neueroffnetes Orchester*. Handel afterwards wrote the following letter in French to him, which is not without interest:—

A Letter to Matheson

"Sir,—The letter I have just received from you obliges me to answer you more fully than I have previously done on the two points in question. I do not hesitate to assert that my opinion is in general conformity with that which you have so well expounded and proved in your book on Solmisation and the Greek Modes. The question, it seems to me, reduces itself to this: whether one ought to prefer a method which is easy and one of the most perfect; or one which is full of great difficulties, capable not only of disgusting music students, but also causing them to waste valuable time, which could be far better used in exploring art and cultivating the natural gifts? Not that I would say that one can find absolutely no use in Solmisation; but since one can acquire the same knowledge in far less time by the method which is so successfully used at present, I do not see why one should not choose the road which

leads us more easily and in less time to the object desired.

"As to the Greek Modes, I find, sir, that you have said all that can be said on them. A knowledge of them is doubtless necessary to those who wish to practise and perform ancient music composed in these modes: but since we are now freed from the narrow limits of ancient music, I do not see of what use the Greek Modes can be in modern music. These, sir, are my sentiments, and I should be glad if you would let me know whether they respond to what you expect from me.

"With regard to the second point, you can judge for yourself that it requires a good deal of research, which I am unable to give owing to my many pressing engagements. When I am a little less occupied, I will think over the more important epochs in the course of my profession, in order that you may see the esteem with which I have the honour to be, Sir,

"Your very Humble and Obedient Servant,

"G. F. HANDEL.

"LONDON, *Feb.* 21, 1719."

Handel's views will probably agree with those of most practical, active musicians. The study of solmisation and the Greek modes is interesting to those who have leisure for antiquarian pursuits, but it is of no value to the composer.

The second question, as to personal details of his life, Handel had no time to discuss. The interviewer was not yet in existence; and Handel would certainly have resented his presence if he had been.

Visit to Anspach

In 1716 he was at Anspach, a small town near Homburg, though in what capacity, or how long he stayed there, is not known. Here, we are told, he met an Englishman, John Christopher Smith, whom he had known as a fellow-student at the University of Halle, and who was "so captivated with his powers, that he accompanied him to England, where he regulated the expenses of his public performances, and filled the office of treasurer with great fidelity." [1]

Zachau's Widow and Son

Handel, as usual, took an opportunity of visiting Halle. Zachau was dead, his widow in very poor circumstances, and her son a ne'er-do-weel. He made a point of sending her remittances from time to time in repayment for the kindness he had received from her husband, and he would have done the same for her son, but that he was told that he would only spend the money in drink.

It is not known when he returned to England; Chrysander says about Christmas, 1716. *Rinaldo* and *Amadigi* were performed in 1717, and Handel is known to have been in London in 1718. By this time the Italian opera had closed its doors through lack of support; the theatre was given over to French dancers, and Handel had to seek other employment. This he found at Canons,[2] a great palace near Edgeware, which has now almost disappeared. The Duke of Chandos, in his capacity of paymaster to Queen Anne's army, had amassed an enormous fortune, and had built a mansion at Edgeware, which he called Canons, at a cost of £230,000.

Handel becomes Capellmeister at Canons

[1] Anecdotes of Handel and Smith, quoted by Schœlcher, p. 44.

[2] Called in contemporary accounts Cannons.

The greatest luxury and magnificence was maintained here, and the Duke, "who loved ever to worship the Lord with the best of everything," had, amongst other things, a private chapel in the style of the churches of Italy. This chapel is now the parish church of Whitchurch, or Little Stanmore. Its exterior is not particularly striking. The tower is the only old part, dating from the reign of Henry VIII. The interior is entirely covered with frescoes by Verrio and Laguerre, two French artists who were sent for specially to paint them. The organ, in a case by Gibbons, stands behind the altar, and is much hidden by it. The interior of the church is an exact imitation, on a minute scale, of the highly-decorated churches one is accustomed to see in Rome. To this chapel the Duke rode every Sunday, attended like the Pope, by Swiss guards, a hundred in number, while Edgeware Road was thronged with the carriages of the nobility and gentry, who went to pray to God with his Grace.

Besides the organ, a full orchestra was maintained, and a resident Chapelmaster, as in foreign courts. The first holder of the post was Dr Pepusch, who, with great magnanimity, retired in Handel's favour, and never seems to have borne him any ill-will afterwards.

Handel set to work in his new post with great enthusiasm. Like Haydn in later times at Esterház, he now had good singers, a chorus and orchestra entirely at his disposal, and a cultured audience to listen to his productions.

Chandos Anthems

He remained at Canons some three years, during which time he wrote the twelve Chandos Anthems for solos and choruses of three, four, and five voices, on the model of the motet or cantata of the Lutheran Church, and preceded

Interior of Whitchurch Church

by an overture, the words being selected from the Psalms. Some of these anthems were afterwards rearranged by him for use in the chapel of George the First.

Esther: the first English Oratorio

At Canons also he wrote his oratorio, *Esther*, whether by command of the Duke, or of his own free will, is not known. The text was arranged by S. Humphrey from Racine's "Esther," and the music was largely borrowed from his *Passion Music*. It was performed on August 29, 1720, at Canons, and the Duke paid Handel £1000 for it. This was his first oratorio, and was designed to introduce to the English people a form of music which they had not yet heard. But it was not really performed in public till much later, and after a few repetitions at Canons it was laid aside. Its overture, however, was performed every year for more than half a century, together with the "Utrecht" *Te Deum*, at the Festival of the Sons of the Clergy at St Paul's Cathedral.

Acis and Galatea

At Canons was also composed the serenata *Acis and Galatea*, the words being by Gay, Pope, Hughes, and Dryden. In Randall's edition it is called a "mask," and in a text-book printed at Dublin, "the celebrated masque." In a copy made by Smith in 1720 it is called a "Pastoral." It is quite different from the *Aci, Galattea e Polifemo* composed at Naples in 1708. A concerto was played on the organ by Handel between the acts, when the work was performed in public, but at Canons there was no break in the music. It seems to have been originally performed with scenery but without action at Canons in 1721.

The organ had an inscription placed on it by Julius Plumer, of Edgeware Road, recording that "Handel was

organist of this church from the year 1718 to 1721, and composed the oratorio of *Esther* upon this organ," which means that Handel *played* on this organ in the performance of *Esther*, which took place in the church.

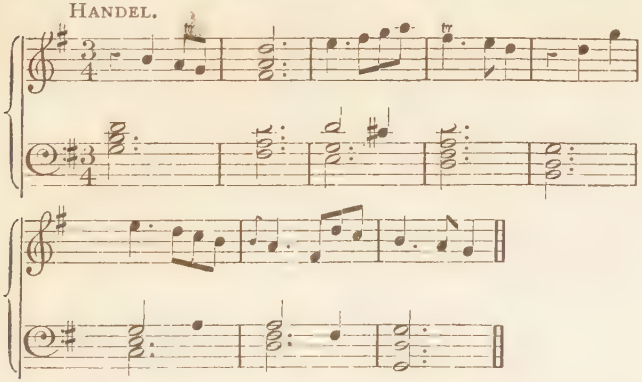
Clavier Pieces

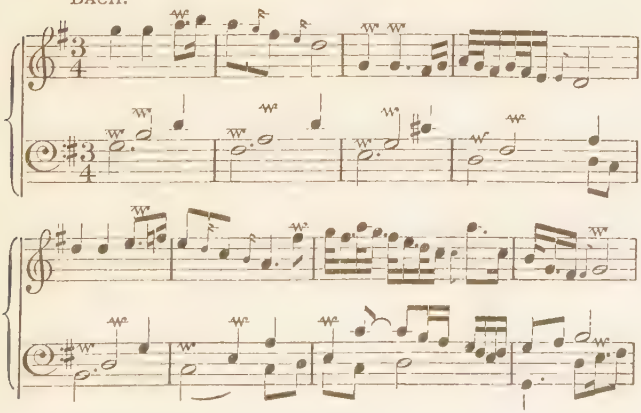
Handel's first instrumental publication, "Suites de Pièces pour le Claveçin," said to have been composed for Princess Anne, appeared in 1720. It was announced in the *Daily Courant*, under the title "Lessons for the Harpsichord." The publisher was Cluer; the preface ran, "I have been obliged to publish some of the following lessons, because surrepticious and incorrect copies of them had got abroad. I have added several new ones to make the work more useful, which if it meets with a favourable reception, I will still proceed to publish more, reckoning it my duty, with my small talent, to serve a nation from which I have received so generous a protection.—G. F. Handel."

These pieces soon became universally popular, and were reprinted in France, Switzerland, Holland, and Germany; but the promised further supply was not published till 1733. It contains a chaconne with sixty-two variations on the same succession of chords as the Goldberg air, to which Bach wrote thirty variations, but the treatment of the subject by the two composers is entirely different.

Handel's work is simply a popular air with variations, comparatively easy to play, and perfectly plain to the ordinary listener. Bach embellishes the simple harmonic groundwork with every conceivable device of imitation, canon, augmentation, diminution, change of time signature, and rhythm; and demands the highest possible technical and intellectual skill from the performer. This difference, which is more or less found throughout the

works of the two composers, is quite sufficient to explain why Handel was always popular, while Bach's music, great as it is, has only slowly won its way to favour.

HANDEL.

BACH.



Harmonious Blacksmith

The set of variations known as the *Harmonious Blacksmith* occurs amongst the *Suites de Pièces* written at Canons. How the name arose is not known: perhaps some fanciful editor gave it, as was the case with Beethoven's so-called *Moonlight* Sonata. It is quite certain that Handel never used it. Crotch stated that he had seen a book at Cambridge containing the melody of this piece attributed to Wagenseil. But various traditions and stories have arisen, which, although well known, must be referred to here. The first is that Handel took shelter from the rain in the shop of a blacksmith named Powell in the village of Edgeware, and that the blacksmith sang an old song in time to the hammer as it struck the anvil, the sound of which seems to have harmonised with some of the melody. On returning home the composer worked the blacksmith's song up in the way that is so familiar to all. Another tradition is that the tune was suggested by a combination of the note produced by the church bell which happened to be tolling, and that of the anvil. Richard Clark, in "Reminiscences of Handel," claims to have discovered Powell's anvil; and Schœlcher says that a square shed was pointed out to him in the middle of the village street at Edgeware as Powell's forge. Rockstro[1] traces the history of Powell's anvil and hammer, which, after passing through various hands, were sold to Mr Maskelyne of the Egyptian Hall in 1879. The anvil, when struck, sounds the note B and immediately afterwards E.

There is a legend emanating from Dr Rimbault, that the movement received its name from Lintott, a publisher

[1] "Life of Handel."

of Bath, who said, "My father was a blacksmith, and this was one of his favourite airs." There is a tombstone in the churchyard at Whitchurch to the memory of William Powell, a blacksmith and parish clerk during the time Handel was there.

Handel must have frequently had occasion to traverse the nine miles of road between Canons and London, yet this short distance was infested with highwaymen, and it was not safe for anyone to go without a retinue. On two successive days in February 1720 the Duke of Chandos was himself attacked by highwaymen, some of whom were killed and others captured by his servants.

Death of Handel's Sister

On August 8, 1718, Handel's sister, Dorothea Sophia, the wife of Michaelsen, died at Halle. He thereupon wrote to his brother-in-law :—

"Sir, My very Honoured Brother—Do not judge, I pray you, of my wish to see you by my delay in starting: it is to my great regret that I find myself kept here by affairs which are unavoidable, and on which I may say my fortune depends, and which have dragged on longer than I expected. If you knew the pain that I feel in not having been able to do what I so fervently desire, you will forgive me. But I hope these affairs will be over in a month from now, and you may count upon my making no delay, and that I shall travel without stopping. I entreat you, my very dear brother, to assure Mama of this and of my obedience, and to let me know how you are, and how are Mama and your dear family, in order to lessen my anxiety and impatience. You can imagine, my very dear brother, how inconsolable I should be, had I not the hope of shortly making up for this

delay by staying with you all the longer. I am astonished that the Magdeburg merchant has not yet executed my letter of exchange: I beg you to keep it, and it shall be set right on my arrival. I have received notice that the pewter will soon be sent to you. I am ashamed of the delay, and that I have not been able ere this to fulfil my promise: I beg you to excuse me, and to believe that in spite of all my efforts I have been unable to succeed. You will agree with me when I am able to explain it by word of mouth. You may have no doubt that I shall hasten my journey: I am longing to see you more than you can imagine. I thank you very humbly for your good wishes for the New Year. I for my part trust that the Almighty will give you and your dear family every kind of prosperity, and will soften by his precious blessings the trouble he has seen fit to bring upon you and me. You may rest assured that I shall always preserve the memory of the kindness you have shown to my late sister, and that these sentiments will continue as long as my life. Have the goodness to give my compliments to Mr Rotth, and all my good friends. I embrace you and all my dear family, and I am with lifelong affection,

"Sir, your very honoured brother,

"Your very humble and obedient servant,

"George Frideric Handel.

"To Mr Michael Dietrich Michaelsen,
"Doctor of Law, Halle, Saxony."

This letter was written in French, which was then the universal language of polite society. Handel, while in England, always spelled his second name in the way given here.

Joint Stock Company

The sermon preached at the funeral of Frau Michaelsen by Michael Heineccio was published by the university printer of Halle, and is extant, together with about a dozen poems upon her. Michaelsen seems to have done all he could for her. As she was in a consumption, he had bought a property near Halle, hoping that the country air might prolong her life, but she died before he was able to move to it.

Handel had not only to compose, but in his capacity of chapel-master, had to train his chorus and teach his principal singers his own peculiar style of music. But this did not fill all the time or energies of one gifted with so extraordinary a power of work ; and he was soon called upon to act in another capacity.

A Royal Academy of Music is founded

In 1719 the Government, being anxious to get rid of unredeemable annuities amounting to £800,000 per annum, offered them for sale. The South Sea Company and the Bank of England competed for their purchase, and the former company bought at $7\frac{1}{2}$ million pounds, with the right of paying off the annuitants at $8\frac{1}{4}$ years' purchase. Subscriptions were opened by the South Sea Company ; the whole nation engaged in speculation ; dozens of bubble companies were started ; the South Sea Company took proceedings against them and thus alarmed its subscribers, who soon found that it was the biggest bubble company of them all. The well-known crash came, and thousands of families were ruined. Amongst the companies formed at this time was one for the promotion of Italian opera, by a committee of twenty noblemen, in 1719. Though it proved eventually to be a bubble, it was begun in all good faith. £50,000 was

privately subscribed, of which the King gave £1000, and the enterprise took the name of the "Royal Academy of Music." The names of some of the original members are given by Hawkins and Burney. The first year the Duke of Newcastle was governor, and Lord Bingley, deputy-governor. The directors were the Dukes of Portland and Queensberry, Earls of Burlington, Stair, and Waldegrave; Lords Chetwynd and Stanhope; Generals Dormer, Wade, and Hunter; Sir John Vanbrugh, Colonel Blathwayt, who had been when a child a pupil of Alessandro Scarlatti, and at the age of twelve had astonished everyone by his harpsichord playing; Colonel O'Hara, Brigadier-General Hunter, Conyers D'Arcy, Bryan Fairfax, Thomas Coke or Cole, William Pulteney, George Harrison, and Francis Whitworth, Esquires. Heidegger was engaged as manager. This enterprise was not intended to be run merely as a speculation, but was an effort in the cause of the best musical art, which had hitherto failed for want of adequate support.

It must be remembered that at this time there did not exist what we should call a musical public. The mass of the people were not sufficiently educated to appreciate anything of the nature of art; and the middle classes, the landowners, were deeply prejudiced against music, considering that it was a foreign luxury which, if tolerated, would inevitably lead to a decadence of the British race. This stupid view of art can still be found amongst a few so-called educated persons in England, who, living in the country and confining their energies to "sports," are quite ignorant of the forces at work in the great world around them. Italian opera was in 1720 cultivated only by the more intelligent and intellectual of the aristocracy. It became the

"fashion" for the wealthy to have a box at the opera, and it was reserved for Handel, after years of incredible efforts, to establish, through his oratorios, a public in England which could be refined in manners and improved in morals by the highest productions of musical art.

The Royal Academy of Music set to work in earnest. Bononcini was invited to take up his residence in England as composer, and a few years afterwards Attilio Ariosti was brought from Berlin [1] for this purpose. Two of Bononcini's operas, *Camilla* and *Thomyris*, had recently been fitted with English words by Haym, and performed with fair success under the management of MacSwiney at the Theatre in Lincoln's-Inn Fields, so that he was not unknown to English opera-going amateurs. Handel was also engaged both as composer and "impresario," for which purpose he sought and easily obtained leave of absence from the Duke of Chandos. He at once set out for Dresden, where the Elector of Saxony Augustus, then King of Poland, maintained an Italian company, and had operas performed in the most perfect and splendid manner possible.

Handel is engaged by the Royal Academy of Music

[1] Hawkins says Bologna.

Chapter VI

Handel goes to Dresden to collect singers—Visits his family—The Royal Academy of Music begins work—*Radamisto*—Rivalries begin—*Muzio Scevola*—*Floridante*—Swift's sarcasm—Bononcini's admirers—Cuzzoni—*Flavio*—Presentment by the Grand Jury against Ridottos—*Giulio Cesare*—*Tamerlano*—The fashion of publishing Handel's operatic airs adapted to sacred words.

Handel as Impresario

Applebee's Weekly Journal of February 21, 1719, announces that "Mr Hendel, a famous Master of Musick, is gone beyond sea, by order of his majesty, to collect a company of the choicest singers in Europe for the opera in the Haymarket." He must therefore have started immediately after sending the letter quoted in the last chapter to his brother-in-law. He went to Dresden by way of Düsseldorf, where he engaged Benedetto Baldassarri, an eminent tenor singer. Where he went after this is not known; in the autumn he was again at Dresden, where he found a large company of the best Italian singers, who, with Lotti, were celebrating the wedding of the Elector with Maria Josepha. Here he after a time succeeded in engaging Signora Durastanti, who, according to Gerber, was specially excellent in male characters, and Senesino, an artificial soprano, whose real name was Francesco Bernardi. *Applebee's Weekly Journal* announces on December 31, 1719, that "Signor Senesino, the famous Italian eunuch has arrived, and 'tis said that the company allows him two thousand guineas for the season." Other

singers engaged by Handel from the Dresden Company were Berenstadt, a German born and trained in Italy; and, according to Burney, Boschi[1] a bass, whom he had met at Naples; Signora Salvai; and an artificial soprano called Berselli. During this visit to Dresden he played on the harpsichord before the Elector Augustus, who presented him with a hundred ducats as a mark of his appreciation of his wonderful powers. The gift was made in February 1720, but Handel had probably played some time previously.[2] The well-known challenge of Bach to Marchand had taken place at Dresden in 1717. Bach had been promised a reward, but it was purloined by a court official, and never reached him. The nature of these two great artists who had so much in common in their lofty view of the profession they were called upon to exercise, differed essentially in money matters. Bach was satisfied with a bare living wage, sufficient to maintain himself and his numerous family in decent comfort of the artizan standard. Handel earned and saved many thousands of pounds, which he devoted to the highest possible uses,—the furtherance of the art of music, and the relief of the unfortunate.

Bach endeavours to meet Handel

Handel took the opportunity of being in Germany to pay the promised visit to his beloved family at Halle. The exact time of his being there is unknown, but in the autumn of 1719 Bach journeyed from Cöthen[3] to visit him there and found that he had that very day set out for England.[4]

Too much has been made of this and a later similar in-

[1] Gerber says that Boschi was engaged by Handel in 1727.
[2] Chrysander, ii. 18.
[3] "Bach," Spitta, vol. ii. p. 9 (English Ed.). [4] Forkel.

cident. The biographers of Bach are apt to hint that Handel was not anxious to meet Bach, while those of Handel endeavour to explain that Bach might have taken more trouble to get to Halle in time, if he was really anxious to meet him. There were no telegraphs in those days, and journeys were slow and laborious. Bach was very eager to learn all that he could of his art, and admiring Handel greatly, took some trouble to meet him. Handel, an excessively busy man, was not living a quiet life of study, and was probably not disposed to give up perhaps a whole day to a possibly dull interview with a learned cantor, who knew nothing of the excitements of operatic life. There is no reason to find fault with either. Any busy professional man, to whom time is of the utmost importance, will sympathise with Handel, while the quiet earnest student, not over burdened with this world's goods or excitements, will have an equal sympathy with Bach.

The Royal Academy begins its work

Handel appears to have returned to England some time before November 1719, and the meetings of the directors of the new Academy began in that month.

Besides composers and singers, the Royal Academy engaged an Italian poet, Antonio Rolli, to write words for the operas, and to act as "Italian Secretary to the Academy." The Academy proposed to give fifty representations during the season, which began on April 2nd, 1720, at the Haymarket. The prices of tickets for subscribers were ten guineas on delivery of the ticket, and two further payments of five guineas each, but a reduction would be made in case less than fifty representations took place. A difficulty arose from the fact that a company of French comedians had been

for a long time in possession of the Haymarket theatre, but was got over by an arrangement by which the French comedians were to have the house for half the week, and the Royal Academy the other half.

Hostilities commence

The Academy was at once attacked by Steele, who started a newspaper in defence of English plays. On March 1st, 1720, this paper, *The Theatre*, announced, "Yesterday, South Sea 179; Opera Company, 83½. No transfer." On March 8th, "At the rehearsal on Friday last, Signior Nihilini Benedetti (*i.e.* Benedetti Baldassari) rose half a note above his pitch formerly known. Opera Stock, from 83½ when began; at 90 when he ended." Again, "This Signior announced in recitative style to the assembled opera directors, that he was not accustomed to play any part below that of a Sovereign or Prince of the blood; and therefore it was allowed him that Tigranes, which was his part in Handel's *Radamisto*, should be raised from a simple officer to a prince."[1]

Shares were sold at £100, each coupon entitling the holder to a seat for the time the company should last. The prices of the ordinary seats were 10s. and 5s., but they were raised or lowered according to circumstances.

Radamisto

The season opened with *Numitor*, composed by Giovanni Porta of Venice, which was performed five times, and was followed on April 27th by *Radamisto*, written by Haym, the music composed by Handel specially for the Academy. Burney says, "The composition of this opera is more solid, ingenious, and full of fire than any drama which Handel had yet produced in this country. The opera had been announced

[1] Quoted from Chrysander, vol. ii. p. 30.

for April 26th, but was postponed in order to allow the French comedians playing, "by particular desire of several ladies of quality." Mainwaring tells us that "the applause it received was almost as extravagant as his *Agrippina* had excited; the crowds and tumults of the house at Venice were hardly equal to those at London. In so splendid and fashionable an assembly of ladies (to the excellence of their taste we must impute it), scarce indeed any appearance of order or regularity, politeness or decency. Many who had forced their way into the house with a impetuosity but ill-suited to their rank and sex, actually fainted through the heat and closeness of it. Several gentlemen were turned back who had offered forty shillings for a seat in the gallery, after having despaired of getting any seat in the pit or boxes." Although the Academy had made a rule of allowing none of the audience on the stage, it broke it, and advertised, "To be admitted on the stage, one guinea." The opera ran for ten nights, and was performed many times in subsequent seasons. Handel subscribes himself in the book of words, "His Majesty's most faithful subject," but he was not a subject of George until 1726, when he was naturalised by a private Act. Great pains were taken with the engraving and printing of this opera, which was published by the author and corrected by him. The printer was Richard Meares, at the Golden Viol, who says in his advertisement that "he presumes to assert that there hath not been in Europe a piece of music so well printed and upon so good paper."

In 1721 forty-one pages of additional songs were published by Meares, and presented gratis to purchasers of the opera.

Radamisto

There was a general consensus of opinion that *Radamisto* was by far the finest opera that had yet appeared on the London, or perhaps any, stage. Handel himself told Hawkins that he considered the arias "Cara sposa" (in *Rinaldo*) and "Ombra cara" (in *Radamisto*) to be the best he had composed. The work consisted of the usual alternations of recitative and aria, with a long final chorus sung by all the soloists. The story, taken from Tacitus' Annals, is merely strung together for the sake of opportunities for music; and the dramatic effects are entirely dependent on the excellence of Handel's composition. Portions of it are adapted from the Latin motet *Silete, venti*, and the German *Passion Music.*

The part of *Radamisto*, originally written for soprano, was afterwards rewritten for contralto, and that of *Tiridates*, originally for a tenor, was transposed to bass for Boschi.

It was performed at Hamburg in 1722 under the name of *Zenobia*, with a German translation, but the Italian arias were retained. A similar company to the Royal Academy was started at Hamburg on this occasion.

Radamisto was succeeded by Domenico Scarlatti's *Narciso*, under the management of his pupil, Thomas Roseingrave, but it had no great success.

In November 1720 Bononcini produced *Astarto*, which was given thirty times, and the publication of his "Cantate e Duetti" dedicated to the King in 1721, brought him in one thousand guineas. *Astarto* was shortly afterwards performed at Hamburg. Ariosti, who was known to Londoners by two operas performed in 1716, produced *Ciro* in 1721.

Rivalries

Rivalries soon began to appear. The aristocracy of those days would seem to be never happy unless they were fostering some kind of competition between musicians. We have seen that Handel had already competed as a performer with Scarlatti in Italy; it was now his fate to be the victim of a foolish and ignoble party warfare, which, beginning with what may have been a friendly competition, ended by ruining him.

Bononcini's operas were undoubtedly for a time more favourably received than those of Handel, and the admirers of each were rapidly dividing into two rival parties.

Muzio Scevola

It was proposed that they should try their strength in an opera, of which one act was to be composed by Bononcini and another by Handel. But since an opera was practically obliged to have three acts, the services of Filippo Mattei, a violoncellist in the orchestra, who went by the name of Pipo, were called upon.

Rolli wrote a libretto, and on April 15, 1721, the opera called *Muzio Scevola* was produced. The first act was by Pipo,[1] the second by Bononcini, and the third by Handel. Each act had its own overture and chorus, and was, therefore, practically a complete short opera.

The issue was doubtful; the partisans of both Handel

[1] Burney, Mainwaring, and Hawkins say that Ariosti was the coadjutor of Handel and Bononcini in *Muzio Scevola*, and Rockstro accepts their statement. A manuscript in the Dragonetti collection at the British Museum, and a notice in Matheson's "Musikal. Patriot," point to Pipo; and Chrysander considers him more likely to have been the composer, because Ariosti was not in England at the time. The matter is not of great importance.

and Bononcini claimed the victory, though Burney and Hawkins say that it undoubtedly lay with Handel. The performance fanned into a flame the spirit of dislike towards Handel which was rising among the aristocracy. Burney says that the employment of the three composers on the same work was not done by way of competition, but merely to save time; and that it was a device often resorted to in Italy for this purpose. But whatever the cause, the result remained that the public took it as a contest. Both composers, however, continued to be employed by the Academy as long as it lasted.

Financial difficulties begin

Besides the difficulties arising from the rival factions supporting Handel and Bononcini, there arose financial troubles. Constant calls of five per cent. on the subscribers are found in the advertisement columns of the newspapers of the time. In November 1721 new directors were chosen, and a new financial scheme was arranged.

It does not belong to our task here to follow the fortunes of the Royal Academy of Music to its untimely end, but only to refer to it in its relation to Handel. Besides operas, it occasionally gave concerts. At one which took place on July 5, 1721, for the benefit of Signora Durastanti, two new cantatas by Mr Handel and Signor Sandoni (at that time second cembalist at the opera) were announced, together with four songs and six duets by the famous Signor Steffani.

Floridante

The second season opened on November 1st, 1721, and on December 9th, *Floridante*, a new opera by Handel, words by Rolli, was brought out. Burney says that the overture was less pleasing to the public than others of Handel's, because

the subject of the fugue admitted of no countersubject. One can hardly imagine a modern audience influenced for or against a work by the technicalities of a fugue! Bononcini followed four weeks later with *Crispo*, for which Rolli supplied the libretto. It was performed seventy-eight times. It was succeeded by his *Griselda*.

Political parties and rival composers

Meanwhile, party strife was raging, and the utter foolishness of it is shown by the fact that the Whigs espoused the cause of Handel, and the Tories that of Bononcini;[1] as if the merits of composers had any connection whatever with political parties.

An epigram which was afterwards set as a "cheerful glee for four voices" appeared in the *Spectator* from the pen of John Byron, a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge.

> "Some say compared to Bononcini
> That Mynheer Handel's but a ninny;
> Others aver, that to him, Handel
> Is scarcely fit to hold a candle;
> Strange all this difference should be
> 'Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee."

These lines were afterwards attributed to Swift. On the other hand Henry Carey, one of Handel's party, wrote—

> "The envy and the wonder of mankind
> Must terminate, but never can thy lays;

[1] According to Hawkin's History, vol. v. p. 276. The *New Musical Magazine*, a contemporary publication, says: "By some strange analogy between music and politics, the Tories declared for Handel, and the Whigs for Bononcini."

For when, absorbed in elemental flame,
This world shall vanish, music will exist.
Then their sweet strains, to native skies returning,
Shall breathe in song of Seraphims and angels,
Commix'd and lost in Harmony eternal,
That fills all Heaven!"

One of Bononcini's admirers wrote of *Griselda*—

"Cast from her kingdom, from her Lord exiled,
Griselda still was lamb-like, mute and mild.
But Rolli's verse provoked the Saint to roar,
She raved, she maddened, and her pinners tore.
Till Bononcini smoothed the rugged strains,
And sanctified the miserable scenes.
At each soft sound, again she felt her thought,
And all the nonsense dy'd beneath the note.
Appeas'd, she cried, it is enough, good Heaven!
Let Gaultier, and let Rolli be forgiven."

There is no doubt that though Bononcini's arias are now antiquated, their simplicity was more able to appeal to the general public of their day than the far more vigorous music of Handel. Bononcini's cause was warmly espoused by the Marlborough family, and when the Duke died he was commissioned to write an anthem for the funeral. It was published by Walsh, and is still extant. In the same year (1722) he published *Divertimenti da Camera, tradotti pel cembalo da quelli composti pel Violino o Flauto*, consisting of arrangements of his cantatas for violin and harpsichord. This had a large sale among his admirers.

Bononcini is supported by the rival faction

The opera season lasted some seven to eight months in

those days. That of 1721-2 closed on June 16, 1722, with a performance of Bononcini's *Griselda*. The chief singers engaged had been Senesino, Baldassarri, Boschi, Mrs Robinson and Salvai.

Ottone

In the following season, on the 12th of January 1723, a new singer, Francesca Cuzzoni, appeared in a new opera, *Ottone*, by Handel, words by Haym, who had succeeded Rolli as secretary and poet.

Burney considers this to be the best of Handel's operas. A duet "A' teneri affetti" is written in what was at that time called the "Lombardic style," introduced by Vivaldi the violinist, consisting of continual syncopation. This style was used with good effect by Bach in the cantata "Freue dich, erlöste Schaar." Of the song "Affanni del pensier," with its original scoring, Mainwaring relates that "an eminent master" (probably Pepusch), who was not on good terms with Handel, said, "That great bear was certainly inspired when he wrote that song." The gavotte in the overture became at once popular, and was played on every instrument from the organ to the salt-box of itinerant musicians.

Cuzzoni

Great difficulties had been experienced in getting Cuzzoni. She was certainly a finer singer than had yet appeared in London, but she had an uncertain temper, and was withal very ugly. Heidegger had engaged her at £2000 for the season, had paid her £250, and she had promised to come in good time to rehearse Handel's new opera. But she delayed coming, and made everyone anxious. Heidegger sent Sandoni to fetch her, and on the journey she suddenly married him. She finally arrived in London in the last week of December, 1722, a fortnight before the production of *Ottone*. The

directors were able to charge four guineas for each seat when she performed.[1]

Handel had considerable trouble with Cuzzoni. She had as stubborn a temper as he had; and in those days a composer was looked upon merely as the person who supplied a frame-work for the singer to elaborate at his or her own sweet will. Handel, however, rebelled against this traditional usage, and insisted on having his music sung exactly as he had written it. During a rehearsal of *Ottone*, she refused to sing "Falsa immagine," whereupon Handel seized her in his arms, saying, "Madam, I know you are a very she-devil; but I will have you know that I am Beelzebub, the prince of the devils," and made as though he would throw her out of the window. This action frightened her into compliance, and she sang the song exactly as it was written, with the result that she made one of her greatest successes in it.

For her benefit on March 26th she chose *Ottone*. Handel, to make up for his previous treatment of her, added three new songs and an entire new scene for her. The rush to hear her on this occasion was so great that fifty guineas were paid for some of the seats. On February 19th, 1723, a new opera by Ariosti, *Coriolan*, words by Haym, was produced with great success. A prison scene caused the ladies in the audience to weep. On March 30, Bononcini produced a new opera, *Erminia*, and on May 14 Handel produced *Flavio*, which had eight representations, the last of which closed the season on June 15. The composition was finished on May 7, allowing just a week for rehearsals.

Flavio

[1] According to Malcolm, "Manners and Customs in London during the Eighteenth Century"; Rockstro, "Life of Handel," p. 139, says five guineas.

In July the opera company of the Royal Academy of Music paid a visit to Paris on the invitation of the Duke of Orleans, and stayed there four months, under the conductorship of Bononcini. Society was entirely taken up with the merits of Italian music, and the claims of the rival composers. Gay complains that conversation was given over to the discussion of fiddles, violoncellos, oboes, and never touched on poetical instruments such as harps, lyres and flutes; people who could not distinguish one tune from another disputed daily about the various styles of Handel, Bononcini and Ariosti, while Senesino was the greatest man that lived. Fielding, an admirer of Handel, writes in "Tom Jones": "It was Mr Western's custom every afternoon as soon as he was drunk, to hear his daughter play on the harpsichord, for he was a great lover of music, and perhaps, had he lived in town, might have passed for a connoisseur, for he always excepted against the finest compositions of Mr Handel."

The Royal Academy gives Masked Balls

Opera was, as a rule, performed only two nights a week: on other nights various entertainments took place. Heidegger advertised "Ridottos," or masked balls, preceded by a concert given by the opera singers. These masked balls led to all kinds of improprieties, so that the Grand Jury of Middlesex took alarm. We learn from Malcolm ("Manners and Customs") that the following presentment was made on February 12, 1723. "Whereas there has been lately published a proposal for six ridottos, or balls, to be managed by subscription, at the King's Theatre in Haymarket, we, the Grand Jury of the County of Middlesex, sworn to inquire for our sovereign Lord the King, and

the body of this county, conceiving the same to be wicked and illegal practices, and which, if not timely suppressed, may promote debauchery, lewdness, and ill conversation ; from a just abhorrence, therefore, of such sort of assemblies, which we apprehend are contrary to law and good manners, and give great offence to His Majesty's good and virtuous subjects, we do present the same, and recommend them to be prosecuted and suppressed as common nuisances to the public, as nurseries of lewdness, extravagance, and immorality, and also a reproach and scandal to civil government."[1] In consequence of this presentment the three last ridottos were given up, but they were renewed during the following season under the name of "Balls."

Guilio Cesare

In the next season Handel produced *Guilio Cesare*, with libretto by Haym, on February 20, 1724. Senesino made a great impression by his rendering of an accompanied recitative, "Alma de'l gran Pompeo," and in a song, "Da Tempesta." During a subsequent performance a piece of machinery fell upon the stage just as Senesino had sung "Cesare non seppe mai, che sia timore" ("Cæsar knows not what fear is"), and the poor hero was so frightened that he trembled, lost his voice, and began to cry.

This opera was published by Cluer and B. Creake in good style.

Fall of Opera Stock

Bononcini and Ariosti were not idle. The former produced *Farnace* and *Calfurnia*, and the latter *Vespasiano*, which, however, caused so much dissension that opera stock was expected to fall ; a call of 5 per cent. was immediately made on the shareholders.

[1] Schœlcher, "Life of Handel," p. 85.

The last opera of the season was a *pasticcio*, called *Aquilio*, arranged by Ariosti.

Tamerlano

On October 31, 1724, Handel produced *Tamerlano*,[1] remarkable for the dramatic power exhibited in its closing scene, where the tyrant, Bajazet, who has taken poison, is tended by his daughter, with such devoted affection, that even Tamerlane is moved to pity. The tragic force of this powerful situation is irresistible. Its chief strength lies in the skill with which the composer leads up to the touching climax; and so artistically is this accomplished, that it would be difficult to find a similar catastrophe more effectively treated in any period of the history of art."[2] It was published in score with English and Italian words.

Rodelinda

In *Rodelinda*, which was produced on February 13, 1725, Cuzzoni made such a sensation that the brown silk dress, embroidered with silver, which she wore, became the fashionable costume for the rest of the season. Another and far more objectionable fashion now arose of publishing the music of Handel's operatic songs with sacred words tacked on. The aria in *Rodelinda*, "Dove sei amato bene," "Where art thou my well beloved," was turned by Preston into "Hope, thou source of every blessing"; by Arnold, into "Holy, holy, Lord God Almighty" (the word "holy" being only uttered twice instead of three times). The fashion thus started soon took root. "Rendi'l sereno al ciglio," "Smooth thy troubled brow," in *Sosarme*, became "Lord remember David"; "Non vi

Sacred words adapted to Handel's Operatic Songs

[1] *London Magazine* February 1733.
[2] "Life of Handel" (Rockstro), p. 140.

piacque," "It did not please you," in *Siroe*, became "He was eyes to the blind"; "Nel riposo," "In the repose," "He was brought as a lamb"; and so on. "The mania for putting everything into their prayers, has betrayed the English into some most unworthy actions," says Schœlcher. Fortunately, however, this mania has now died out, and when an operatic piece has to be sung in English, a more or less respectable translation is made use of in the present day.

Bacchanalian words adapted to Handel's Operatic Songs

But the religious mania was not the only thing from which Handel's music suffered, for low comedy and bacchanalian songs laid it under contribution.. The famous gavotte in the overture to *Ottone* became a bacchanal, "Bacchus, god of mortal pleasures, by Mr Handel." Words beginning "O my pretty Punchinello," were adapted to a song in *Rodelinda*; "Ben spesso in vago prato," "Oft in fair meadow," "the music by Mr Handel"; and the march in *Rinaldo* was introduced in the "Beggars' Opera."

The whole of *Rodelinda* was published by Cluer in score, and also for the flute, soon after its appearance. It had few subscribers. Chrysander explains this by the fact that when Bononcini and Ariosti published operas, they solicited subscriptions from house to house, a course to which Handel would never stoop .

Handel's music pilfered

During the time that Handel was busy as composer and manager of opera, others were performing his music elsewhere for their own profit, for there was no legal property in those days in literary or musical work. Walsh was busy pillaging and publishing the songs in *Acis and Galatea*, and the work

itself was being constantly performed by different persons. Thus in 1731 and 1732 Rich was performing it at his theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and a new English theatre company in the Haymarket was doing the same, with "scenery, machines, and other decorations." Handel's former cook, Waltz, who turned into an excellent bass singer and viol di gamba player, took the part of Polyphemus, while the Arnes, father, son and daughter, managed it. Poor Handel had no legal power to prevent these piracies; his only resource was to advertise a more complete performance of the work, with additions, and with Italian songs. He was obliged to take any course that might attract an audience, or he would not have intermingled Italian with English in a purely English work. "He was fighting for bare existence against a band of sharpers, whose only care was, how to fill their pockets most easily at his expense. The event proved that, in matters of worldly policy, he was considerably more than a match for his unscrupulous antagonists."[1]

[1] "Life of Handel" (Rockstro), p. 175.

Engraving published by Walsh for subscribers to *Alexander's Feast.*
See p. 141.

Chapter VII

Handel becomes a householder—Plays at St Paul's before the Royal Princesses—Letter to Michaelsen—Handel becomes a British subject—*Scipio*—*Alessandro*—Faustina and Cuzzoni—Senesino has an accident—Rival parties—*Admeto*—An opera stopped by hisses and catcalls—Senesino retires—Bononcini again engaged to write an opera—Death of George I., and accession of George II.—Handel's salary is continued by the new king—Coronation anthems—*Riccardo*—*Siroe*—*Tolomeo*—*Beggar's Opera.*

In 1724 the Royal Academy found that they could do without Bononcini, and therefore did not re-engage him. To make up for this, the Duchess of Marlborough settled on him a pension of £500 a year in order to keep him in England. He lived for some years longer in her house until he was forced to leave England, as will appear later.

Handel becomes a householder

About this time, Handel became the tenant or owner of No. 57 Brook Street, Hanover Square, now No. 25, of which the rateable value was £35, and here he lived to the end of his life. It was a very suitable location for a composer. Sufficiently removed from the noises of the town, and yet

you will always obtain from me. I had hoped to be able to renew my intercourse with you by word of mouth, and to make a journey to your neighbourhood when the king goes to Hanover; but my endeavours have not been successful this time, and the position of my affairs deprives me of this happiness, though I still hope to have so great a pleasure some day. Meanwhile, it will be a very great consolation to me if I dare flatter myself that you will accord me some place in your memory, and honour me with your friendship, since I shall never cease being, with unalterable love and attachment,

"Sir,

"Your very honoured Brother,

"Your very humble and

"obedient Servant,

"GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL."

"I make my very humble respects to your wife,[1] and I tenderly embrace my dear god child and the rest of your dear family; my compliments, if you please, to all my friends."

Handel becomes a British Subject

On February 13, 1726, Handel took the oath of allegiance in the House of Lords as a naturalised British subject, and was nominated "Composer to the Court," and on March 12 produced *Scipione*, the composition of which was finished on March 2nd. The words were by Rolli.

Scipio

It opens with the well-known march in D. The Grenadier Guards claim that this march, which they still play, was specially composed for them by Handel before its introduction into the opera.[2] It was introduced

[1] *i.e.* his second wife. [2] "Life of Handel," Rockstro, p. 143.

into the *Beggars' Opera* as a duet, "Brave Boys prepare." The singers in *Scipio* were Cuzzoni, Constantini, Senesino, Baldi, Antinori and Boschi.

Alessandro

Not two months after, namely, on May 5th, yet another new opera was produced, *Alessandro*, which ran continuously till June 7th, on which day the season closed. The composition was finished on April 11, so that nearly a month, an unusual length of time, was allowed for rehearsals. This opera is important as being the first in which the famous Faustina, the wife of Hasse, appeared. She had long been expected.

Faustina

Negotiations had been carried on for years with her. Her reputation was enormous; and she was quite clever enough to see that by delaying her appearance she would not only increase the eagerness of the public, but would be offered higher terms. She was finally engaged at £2,500 for the season. She was as good-looking as Cuzzoni was ill-favoured; she had wonderful command of vocal dexterity, and a knack of imperceptibly taking breath, so that she could apparently hold out a note for any length of time. Handel had the difficult task of writing for both Faustina and Cuzzoni in such a manner as to favour neither at the expense of the other. He caused them both to appear at once in a recitative for two voices, in which Roxana and Lisaura, the two mistresses of Alexander, expressed their love and their jealousy. He managed that the arias for each should be so suitable to their respective excellencies that they each obtained equal applause; while in a duet each voice had alternately the principal part. His treatment was naturally not appreci-

Handel's efforts to prevent rivalries between the singers

you will always obtain from me. I had hoped to be able to renew my intercourse with you by word of mouth, and to make a journey to your neighbourhood when the king goes to Hanover; but my endeavours have not been successful this time, and the position of my affairs deprives me of this happiness, though I still hope to have so great a pleasure some day. Meanwhile, it will be a very great consolation to me if I dare flatter myself that you will accord me some place in your memory, and honour me with your friendship, since I shall never cease being, with unalterable love and attachment,

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Alessandro

Faustina

Handel's efforts to prevent rivalries between the singers

ated by the fops, who were anxious to see Cuzzoni sung down, but the result proved so attractive that the opera was given three times a week instead of only twice, which was the normal number of weekly performances. One of the secrets of Handel's success as a composer, was his power of adapting his music to the peculiar excellencies of each individual performer. In the case of Faustina he had to do this by means of reports, for he had not heard her; but his success was as great as with those singers with whom he was well acquainted.

Senesino had another slight accident in this opera, which caused much laughter. In his prowess in leading his soldiers to the assault of Ossidraca he so far forgot himself in the heat of the combat as to stick his sword through one of the pasteboard stones of the town wall, and bear it in triumph before him as he entered the breach.[1]

Another contest was now on hand; not this time between rival composers, but the two singers Cuzzoni and Faustina, in spite of Handel's efforts to prevent it.

Cuzzoni and Faustina

By one account they were of the same age, having been born in 1700, though another account says that Faustina was seven years older than Cuzzoni. The compass of their voices seems to have been about the same, and all accounts agree as to the perfection of their singing. In those days, besides beauty of voice and expression, great technical skill was demanded of singers, especially in the performance of the "divisions" and trills so familiar in Handel's songs. Moreover, singers were expected to add their own grace notes and other ornaments to the melody

[1] *World*, February 8, 1753.

written for them by the composer. Thus, Burney tells us of Cuzzoni that "a native warble enabled her to execute divisions with such facility as to conceal every appearance of difficulty"; "in a cantabile air, though the notes she added were few, she never lost an opportunity of enriching the cantilena with all the refinements and embellishments of the time. Her shake was perfect." Of Faustina Burney says: "She in a manner invented a new kind of singing, by running divisions with a neatness and velocity which entranced all who heard her. She had the art of sustaining a note longer, in the opinion of the public, than any other singer, by taking her breath imperceptibly. Her beats and trills were strong and rapid; her intonation perfect."

Here then was plenty of opportunity for jealousy and petty rivalry, and the fashionable public encouraged it to the utmost. Not so Handel. His wish was to get the best singers together in order to obtain the most artistic performance possible. In *Alessandro* he gave each the same number of songs; each sang a duet with Senesino, and in a duet for the two ladies the composer so arranged the parts that each had the upper notes in turn, so that there could be no question of first and second singer. That he could make a respectable drama under these conditions would appear to be impossible; if he was able to do so, he gave another and striking proof of his genius.

But the supporters of opera did not demand dramatic proprieties. All they wanted was an opportunity of hearing the singers, and pitting them against one another. Handel's efforts failed to keep the peace; and the history of the Italian opera of those days shows a succession of

miserable quarrels between rival composers, rival singers, and rival parties.

A story is told to the effect that Cuzzoni had been made by her partisans to swear on the Gospels that she would never accept a less sum than Faustina, and that the directors, wishing to get rid of her, offered her £2000, and Faustina £2001, whereupon she left the kingdom ; and another ridiculous report was circulated to the effect that she was under sentence of death by beheading, for murdering her husband. But there is no truth in these stories, for both ladies continued to sing together under Handel's tuition for a long time. The rival parties hissed their opponents' *protegé* ; epigrams appeared in the papers, of which the following is an example :

Rival parties create disturbances

> " Old poets sing that beasts did dance
> Whenever Orpheus played ;
> So to Faustina's charming voice
> Wise Pembroke's asses brayed."

A reply is found in an epigram on the miracles wrought by Cuzzoni :

> " Boast not how Orpheus charmed the rocks ;
> And set a-dancing stones and stocks,
> And tygers' rage appeased ;
> All this Cuzzoni has surpassed ;
> Sir Wilfred seems to have a taste,
> And Smith and Gage[1] are pleased."

[1] Sir Wilfred Lawson, Simon Smith, and Sir William Gage were members of the Royal Academy.

Disturbance

On January 31st, 1727, *Admeto* was produced, and had a run of nineteen nights; the libretto is founded on the "Alcestis" of Euripides. *Admeto* The performers were Senesino, in the part of Admetus, Boschi as Hercules, Faustina as Alcestis, and Cuzzoni as the heroine of a counterplot. While Cuzzoni was singing, a voice from the gallery was heard saying, "Damn her, she has a nest of nightingales in her bosom," and in a copy of the libretto, belonging to Lady Cowper, a note is found against the name of Faustina. "She is the devil of a singer." The music of *Admeto* was published by Cluer, and stolen "with his usual mastery" by Walsh.[1]

A performance on May 6th of *Astyanax*, by Bononcini was stopped by hisses, yells, and catcalls from the leaders of the best society in London, the voices of the two singers being drowned by the hubbub.[2]

A satire on the luxury and effeminacy of the age has the following passages:—

"Cuzzoni can no longer charm,
Faustina now does all alarm;
And we must buy her pipe so clear
With hundreds, twenty-five a year.

And if a brace of powder'd coxcombs meet
They kiss and slabber in the open street:
They talk not of our Army or our Fleet,
But of the warble of Cuzzoni sweet,
Of the delicious pipe of Senesino
And of the squalling trill of Harlequino;

[1] Chrysander.
[2] Rockstro, p. 152.

With better voice, and fifty times her skill,
Poor Robinson is always treated ill:
But, such is the good nature of the town
'Tis now the mode to cry the English down.

They care not, whether credit rise or fall,
The opera with them is all in all.
They'll talk of tickets rising to a guinea,
Of pensions, duchesses, and Bononcini
Of a new eunuch in Bernardi's place,
And of Cuzzoni's conquest or disgrace."

Handel's friend Arbuthnot wrote a pamphlet "The devil to pay at St James's; or a full and true account of a most horrid and bloody battle between Madam Faustina and Madam Cuzzoni, also, of a hot skirmish between Signor Boschi and Signor Palmerini. Moreover, how Senesino has taken snuff, is going to leave the opera, and sing Psalms at Henley's Oratory."

Senesino becomes restive

The engagement of the two ladies led to a new and unforeseen trouble. The funds of the Royal Academy were rapidly becoming exhausted by the enormous sums paid to singers, calls were constantly made on the subscribers, and it was necessary to offer every possible attraction to the public, when Senesino, the spoilt idol of society, finding that his performance was slightly less attractive than that of the two ladies, suddenly announced that he was ill, and must retire to the Continent. Once having got away he made the greatest difficulties about returning in the following season, since he had now learned that the Academy were easily to be squeezed by any Italian singer whom they thought they could not do without.

Death of George I.

He did not return till after Christmas and the opera could not therefore open for the following season till then. Its place was supplied by an Italian comedy company which was patronised by the King.

Another attempt to produce English Opera

In 1726 an English version of *Camilla* by Bononcini's brother was tried by Rich (at which theatre is unknown) with English singers, but apparently without any great success. The audience would only listen to Italian singers: not for the sake of music, but because being idle and extremely frivolous, it merely wanted something to get up rivalries about. People went to the opera much as they went to a prize-fight, a bear-garden, or a cock-pit, in order to see human beings or animals or birds trying to get the better of one another.

Bononcini and Ariosti recalled

The Royal Academy was sinking more and more into pecuniary difficulties. After the performance of *Admeto*, it called Bononcini and Ariosti again to its assistance, commissioning them each to write an opera. Bononcini produced *Astyanax* with the result we have already seen: and Ariosti produced nothing.

Death of George I.

In the summer of 1727 George I. set out for Hanover with one of his mistresses. His wife had recently died, after being for thirty-two years imprisoned in a castle on suspicion of adultery with a Swedish count. In her last illness she sent a letter to the King complaining of his ill-usage, and summoning him to meet her within a year and a day before the tribunal of God, to answer for his conduct. This so alarmed the King that he fell into a convulsion and died before reaching Hanover.

George II. confirms Handel's Pensions

On the accession of George II. in June 1727, Handel was secured of an income of £600 a year for life, made up of two pensions of £200 each given him by Queen Anne, and a salary of the same amount as music-master to the young princesses. He was also given the honorary titles of Composer to the Court and Composer to the Chapel Royal, for which he had no regular salary.[1]

Coronation Anthems

The Coronation took place at Westminster Abbey, on October 11, on which occasion Handel's four Coronation anthems, beginning with the well-known *Zadok the Priest*, were performed with a large orchestra.

Unlike the operas, in which practically no chorus appeared, these anthems, like the "Te Deums," consisted mostly of massive writing of seven, six, and five vocal parts. The singers were all English, being members of the Chapel Royal and Westminster Abbey choirs. Twelve boys and thirty-five men were employed, the solos being sung by Francis Hughes, John Freeman, John Church, Samuel Wheely, and Bernhard Gates. The instrumental part was played by the opera orchestra, and a new organ was built for the occasion by Schroder. This instrument,

[1] Handel, being now by naturalization a British subject, was able to hold these posts, for which fees seem to have been paid him on special occasions. His predecessor was Dr Croft, who as Court Composer, Organist, Master of the Chapel Royal, Teacher of the Royal Children, &c., received altogether £522 a year. Croft was succeeded as Master of the Children of the Chapel Royal by Bernhard Gates, as Organist by Mr Robinson, and as Composer (for two were employed) by Dr Greene.

which was a very fine one, was afterwards given to the Abbey by the King. A double bassoon was used for the first time on this occasion. It had been designed and made by Stanesby, a flute maker, under the superintendence of Handel himself. It is called in Handel's scores *Basson-grosso*. Schœlcher, misunderstanding the expression familiar to organists, "16 feet tone," is puzzled by imagining a bassoon 16 feet high. The instrument was, of course, about 16 feet long, but bent on itself to a convenient length, in the way familiar to all concert-goers.

The Double Bassoon introduced

The actual placing of the crown on the head of the new king was accompanied by "instrumental music of every sort" (*i.e.*, the full orchestra); and at the conclusion of the ceremony was sung the fourth anthem, "My heart is inditing of a good matter." It is stated that the Bishop of London had selected and sent a list of texts to Handel for these anthems, and that Handel, taking offence at this, wrote to the Bishop, saying, "I have read my Bible well, and will choose for myself."

On October 30 a Court ball took place, for which Handel, as composer to the Court, provided a series of minuets, which were immediately published by Walsh.

The Royal Academy was now moribund. Subscribers, attracted by other pleasures, or disgusted with the riotous scenes which frequently took place, had fallen off in large numbers, and no one came forward in their place. The £50,000 was exhausted, and Opera shares were unsaleable. Handel worked desperately to save the Academy from ruin. Thinking

The Royal Academy of Music gradually sinks

that a story taken from English history would attract the English people, he produced *Riccardo Primo, Re d'Inghilterra* on November 11, 1727, text by Rolli,[1] in which again the parts for Cuzzoni and Faustina were equally matched. But the disturbances experienced in the opera whenever these two performers appeared were beginning to have their natural result, and respectable people stayed away.

Riccardo Primo

Handel now made further efforts to save the Academy from ruin. He produced *Siroe*, libretto by Haym, after Metastasio, on February 17, 1728, which was performed nineteen times, and *Tolomeo* (words by Haym), on April 30, in which he obtained a novel effect of echo, by making Senesino repeat Cuzzoni's phrases behind the scenes. The opera ran for seven nights only. All his efforts were unavailing. In addition to its internal squabbles, the Royal Academy was now being actively attacked from outside.

Handel's efforts to save the Academy from ruin

Siroe

In 1727 a work by Gay, called the *Beggar's Opera*, consisting of songs coupled together by dialogue, had been produced at the Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields. The music was arranged by Dr Pepusch, the director being Rich. It was low, vulgar, and indecent, and therefore proved irresistible to the fashionable society of the day. It had a run of sixty three nights, and went a long way towards ruining the Academy, already impoverished by its singers and the quarrels of rival partisans. The libretto treats of

Beggar's Opera

[1] Rolli dedicated the libretto to the King, and was rewarded with the title of Court Poet.

thieves, murderers, receivers of stolen goods, highwaymen, and other equally reputable characters; and appears to be a skit on the manners and customs of the aristocratic society of the time. Pepusch composed an overture in the usual form of a slow movement followed by a fugue; and the march in *Rinaldo* is sung as a robbers' chorus. A prologue is spoken by a beggar and a player, in which a discussion takes place as to what will best please the audience; and in an epilogue, spoken by the same characters, the conclusion is come to that the play must end happily since this is expected of every opera. The thing continued for more than a century to please the public, if one may judge from the number of editions that appeared. No less than twenty editions and arrangements are in the British Museum, ranging from 1728 to 1892.

Moral effect of the Beggar's Opera

This glorification of crime is said by Hawkins to have fulfilled the prognostications of many that it would prove injurious to society. "Rapine and violence have been gradually increasing ever since its first representation; the rights of property, and the obligation of the law that guards it, are disputed on principle; young men, apprentices, clerks in public offices, and others, disdaining the arts of honest industry, and captured with the charms of idleness and criminal pleasure, now betake themselves to the road, affect politeness in the very act of robbery; and in the end become victims to the justice of their country; and men of discernment, who have been at the pains of tracing this great evil to its source, have found that not a few of those who, during these last fifty years, have paid to the law the forfeit of their lives, have, in the course of their pursuits been

emulous to imitate the manners and general character of Macbeath" (the hero of the *Beggar's Opera*).

It was followed by a number of imitations, called the *Village Opera*, *Lover's Opera*, *Harlequin Opera*, *Quaker's Opera*, etc.

Chapter VIII

Bononcini attacks Handel—Collapse of the Royal Academy of Music—Handel goes into partnership with Heidegger—Goes to Italy to find fresh singers—*Lotario, Partenope, Poro, Orlando*—Gates performs *Esther*—Handel protects himself by performing *Esther*—Arne performs *Acis*—Handel is forced to protect himself from Arne—Senesino deserts him for the rival opera, under Bononcini—Handel takes to oratorio—*Deborah*—Attack by Rolli—Another by Goupy.

Bononcini now published a pamphlet in Italian and English called "Advice to Composers and Performers of Italian music," which he issued gratis to anyone asking for it. It was an attack on Handel's method, which, he said, consisted of overloading the songs with instrumental accompaniment, and thereby ruining the voices It was immediately answered by a friend of Handel in "Remarks on a pamphlet lately imported from Modena [1] called Advice to Composers and Performers of Vocal Musick." The matter does not appear to have disturbed Handel very much.

Bononcini attacks Handel

The last performance given by the Academy was that of *Admeto* on June 1st, 1728; it was to have been repeated on June 11th, but Faustina was taken ill. The whole company of singers now dispersed, and by next year were engaged at two of the theatres in Venice. On June 5th the general court of the Royal Academy met, "in order to consider of proper

End of the Royal Academy of Music

[1] Bononcini was born at Modena.

measures for recovering the debts due to the Academy, and discharging what is due to performers, tradesmen, and others; and also to determine how the scenes, cloaths, &c., are to be disposed of, if the opera cannot be continued. *N.B.*—All the subscribers are desired to be present, since the whole will be then decided by a majority of votes."

This was the end. Abortive efforts were made to appoint a new body of directors in November, and to meet in January; after this nothing more is heard of the Royal Academy of Music. It had given 245 performances of operas by Handel, 108 of operas by Bononcini, 55 by Ariosti, and 79 by other composers.

Handel goes into partnership with Heidegger to carry on Opera

But though the Royal Academy had ceased to exist, Handel did not give up hope. Heidegger was now the lessee of the Haymarket Theatre, and Handel immediately went into partnership with him, risking the £10,000 he had saved by the hard work and economy of the past twenty years. Heidegger was to attend to the business part, Handel to the music. The King supported the undertaking with his annual subscription of £1000, and there appears to have been a board of directors; but it is doubtful whether the new undertaking was on the same lines as the old one. It was, however, supported by some of the nobility as well as the King, for there was as yet no other audience.

Handel again an impressario

The first thing to do was to find singers, and Handel set off for Italy in the autumn of 1728. His friend, the Abbé Steffani, accompanied him, and he visited Venice, Rome, Milan, and other cities. On his way home he visited his mother in Halle, having previously forwarded a letter

to his brother-in-law, Michaelsen, announcing his intended visit.[1] He reached Halle in June, and found that his mother was quite blind and paralytic, being only able to walk from one room to another with a stick. This was the last time he saw her, for she died on December 27th, 1730, a few weeks before her eightieth birthday.

Bach makes another effort to meet Handel

It was during this visit that Handel received an invitation from Bach to visit him at Leipsic, Bach being too ill to go to Halle. But he would not leave his mother, as was only natural, and this fact explains the apparent incivility of his refusal of the invitation.[2]

Two subsequent letters to Michaelsen are extant, in which he thanks him for the care taken with the funeral of his mother, and for forwarding a copy of the funeral sermon.

While in Italy, Handel had opportunities of hearing new operas by Porpora, Vinci, Pergolesi and Hasse. He was invited to visit Cardinal Colonna at Rome, who offered him a fine portrait of himself; but Handel hearing that the Pretender was a guest at the house, refused the invitation and the portrait, since it would not be at all suitable for him to meet the enemy of his patron, George II.

The new opera company

In the *Daily Courant* of July 2nd, 1729, we find the following notice: "Mr Handel, who is just returned from Italy, has contracted with the following persons to perform in the Italian opera; Signor Bernacchi, who is esteemed the best singer in Italy; Signora Merighi, a woman of

[1] The letter is extant and is quoted in full by Rockstro, p. 161.

[2] See pages 81, 82.

a very fine presence, an excellent actress, and a very good singer, with a counter-tenor voice; Signora Strada, who hath a very fine treble voice, a person of singular merit; Signor Annibale Pio Fabri, a most excellent tenor, and a fine voice; his wife, who performs a man's part exceeding well; Signora Bertoldi, who has a very fine treble voice, she is also a very genteel actress, both in men and women's parts: a bass voice from Hamburg, there being none worth engaging in Italy."[1] Handel had engaged Godfried Reimschneider, first bass in the cathedral of Hamburg, on his return journey. The company landed at Dover in September, and the theatre opened with a new opera, *Lotario*, by the new manager on December 2nd, 1729; and this was followed by *Partenope* on February 24th, 1730.[2] Neither work was very successful, and Handel, concluding that a leading singer was required to draw the public, engaged Senesino, through the good offices of Mr Colman, the English Minister at Florence. Senesino had been singing at Florence, and was engaged to sing in London for 1400 guineas for the season. He made his reappearance in a revival of *Scipio* at the King's Theatre, and on Feb. 2nd, 1731, sang the principal part in *Poro*, an opera which was very successful, and was repeated in the four following seasons. During this season Handel revived *Rodelinda*

Lotario, *Partenope*

[1] Handel had also engaged "some other persons of less account" (Hawkins, vol. v. p. 318), amongst whom was Commano, a bass.

[2] *Lotario* was published by Cluer's widow. After this Walsh became Handel's publisher. Both *Lotario* and *Parthenope* were arranged from old and well-known opera librettos which had been set by many Italian composers.

and *Rinaldo*, the latter "with new scenes and cloathes." A change was also made in the singers: Signora Merighi was replaced by Campioli, an artificial soprano; Pio Fabri, the tenor, by Pinacci, and Commano, by Montagnana.

Handel was now hard at work again composing. On January 15th, 1732, he produced *Ezio*, and on February 19th *Sosarme*, which, though both fairly successful, failed to bring pecuniary profit to the partners. The libretto of *Ezio* was by Metastasio, that of *Sosarme* probably by Matteo Noris. *Ezio* was published by Walsh, and stolen by Cluer's widow; and *Sosarme* was published as soon as possible by Walsh in order to forestall Mrs Cluer.

Ezio, *Sosarme*

More lampoons now appeared, of which the following are examples:

> "When smooth stupidity's the way to please,
> When gentle Handel's singsongs more delight,
> Than all a Dryden or a Pope can write."

And,

> "In days of old when Englishmen were men,
> Their music like themselves was grave and plain.
> . . . . . .
> In tunes from sire to son delivered down,
> But now, since Britons are become polite,
> Since masquerades and operas made their entry,
> And Heydegger and Handell ruled our gentry;
> A hundred different instruments combine,
> And foreign songsters in the concert join
> And give us sound and show, instead of sense."

In 1733 the new tenor Pinacci had left, and the company was now reduced to five singers: Senesino, Strada,

Bertolli, Celeste a new soprano, and Montagnana. For them Handel composed *Orlando*, produced January 27, 1733. This fine opera has several remarkable points. In it the composer is said by Burney ("History of Music," vol. iv. p. 365) to have used the diminished 7th for the first time, though the passage he quotes does not contain this interval. In order to represent the ravings of madness, Handel uses $\frac{5}{8}$ rhythm, a novelty at that time, but made familiar to modern audiences by Tschaikowsky's "Pathetic" symphony; and he makes use of two "violette marine" a kind of viola-d'amour recently invented by the brothers Castrucci, one of whom was the leading first violin of the orchestra at that time. Colman remarks, "*Orlando*, very fine and magnificent." Its ninety pages were engraved, printed, and bound by Walsh in seventeen days. *Floridante* was revived, and the season closed with Bononcini's *Griselda* on June 9th.

Orlando

It will be remembered that while at Canons Handel had composed and performed an oratorio called *Esther* privately, this being the first work of the kind heard in England. In 1731, Bernard Gates, Master of the children of the Chapel Royal, having by some means obtained the score, caused it to be performed privately by his boys, the part of Esther being taken by John Randall, afterwards a Doctor and Professor of Music at the University of Cambridge. The orchestra was composed of amateurs who belonged to the Philharmonic Society.[1] A little later, Gates put his forces at the service of the Academy of Ancient Music, who privately performed *Esther* on a much larger scale, and

Esther revived

[1] Not the present Philharmonic Society, which was founded in 1813

supplied an orchestra from their own members. The success of these experiments was such as to induce some speculator to give *Esther* publicly in Villars Street, York Buildings, on April 20, 1732.

This performance took place without Handel's sanction or participation, and in the then state of the law he could not prevent it, if he had wished to do so. But that he should not be entirely a loser, he arranged a performance for his own profit, of which the following advertisement appeared in the *Daily Journal:*

"By His Majesty's Command.—At the King's Theatre, in the Haymarket, on Thursday, the 2nd of May will be performed the sacred story of *Esther*; an oratorio in English, formerly composed by Mr Handel, and now revised by him with several additions, and to be performed by a great number of voices and instruments.

"*N.B.*—There will be no acting on the stage, but the house will be fitted up in a decent manner for the audience. The music to be disposed after the manner of the coronation service.

"Tickets to be delivered at the same price."

An important feature of this revision was the augmentation of the band; some of the music being scored for no less than five violin parts, viola, violoncello, and bass, two flutes, two oboes, two bassoons, harpsichord, harp, theorbo and organ; while some of the choruses are in seven parts.

It was an enormous success, and seems to have completely suppressed the Villars Street efforts. Colman mentions that "*Hester*, an English oratorio, was performed six times, and very full." The solo parts were sung in English by Strada, Bertolli, Montagnana and Senesino. The words "There will be no acting," refer

to the performances by Gates, in which a certain amount of action was introduced. Handel, knowing his public, recognised that they would never tolerate any connection of the theatre with words from Scripture, and oratorios have continued to be performed without action to this day.[1]

Another performance of Handel's music without his participation was that already referred to in chapter vi. when the upholsterer, Arne, father of the celebrated Dr Arne, gave "Acis and Galatea" "with scenery, machines, and other decorations," and with action at the New Theatre[2] in the Haymarket, on May 17th. This caused Handel to announce a performance for the 10th of June at the King's Theatre of the same work, as "revised by him, with several additions, and to be performed by a great number of the best voices and instruments," but without action.

Del Pò now advertised, "Whereas Signor Bononcini intends, after the serenata composed by Mr Handel hath been performed, to have one of his own, and hath desired Signora Strada to sing in that entertainment: Aurelio del Pò, husband of the said Signora Strada, thinks it incumbent upon him to acquaint the nobility and gentry, that he shall think himself happy in contributing to their satisfaction; but, with respect to this request, hopes he shall be permitted to decline com-

[1] An exception was made in 1833, when an oratorio called the "Israelites in Egypt," made up of Rossini's and Handel's works on the same subject, was performed on the stage at Covent Garden with action. Queen Victoria and her mother, the Duchess of Kent, attended, and the performance was very successful; but the Bishop of London objected, and further performances were suppressed.

[2] Called also the "Little Theatre." It stood nearly on the same spot as the present Haymarket Theatre.

plying with it for reasons best known to the said Aurelio del Pò and his wife." This announcement was construed by the gossips of the day into a political allusion, an attempt of the Pretender to open a correspondence with the Academy of Music. Aurelio, they said, stood for the Pretender, Del for the devil, and Pò for the pope.

The performance of Bononcini's Pastoral entertainment took place on the appointed day at Handel's theatre, for Handel seems to have been above the petty jealousies of the time.

The success of *Esther* and *Acis* without action led Handel to see his way to a new kind of work which should answer if opera should fail, which it showed every sign of doing. But, faithful to his first love, he continued to struggle against adversity, and produced *Orlando*, the last opera in which Senesino sang for him. Senesino seems to have been anything but an admirable character. He was insolent, cowardly, and quarrelsome. He had, while at Dresden, by his quarrels with the capellmeister caused the break up of the Dresden Company before Handel engaged him;[1] and was publicly and violently caned behind the scenes by Lord Peterborough for his insolence to Mrs Robinson at a rehearsal. But he served Handel's purpose, and no doubt was in awe of him. He now revolted from Handel and joined Bononcini, who was at this time engaged in organising a rival opera house in Lincoln's Inn Fields. For this scheme Porpora was engaged as conductor, and all Handel's singers, except Strada, went over to the hostile camp.

Senesino's character

Senesino deserts Handel

[1] Quantz, "Autobiography," referred to by Rockstro, p. 181.

Handel, worsted in Opera, tries Oratorio

Handel was now without singers, but he was not yet beaten. There was no doubt whatever that as far as he was concerned Italian opera was at an end. He had already in his *Te Deum* and in *Esther* proved his strength as a composer of massive choral music, for which there was no opportunity in opera; and he now resolved to try his fortune with oratorio, in which the solo singers would not take so important a place as the chorus. His friend Aaron Hill, moreover, in the following letter, gave voice to a growing popular feeling that the English language was good enough for musical setting:

To Mr Handel.

Dec. 5, 1732.

Sir,—I ought sooner to have returned you my hearty thanks for the silver ticket, which has carried the obligation further than to myself: for my daughters are both such lovers of musick, that it is hard to say which of them is most capable of being charmed by the compositions of Mr Handel.

Having this occasion for troubling you with a letter, I cannot forbear to tell you the earnestness of my wishes, that, as you have made such considerable steps towards it already, you would let us owe to your inimitable genius the establishment of musick upon a foundation of good poetry; where the excellence of the sound should be no longer dishonoured by the poorness of the sense it is chained to.

My meaning is, that you would be resolute enough to deliver us from our Italian bondage, and demonstrate that English is soft enough for opera, when composed by poets

who know how to distinguish the sweetness of our tongue from the strength of it, where the last is less necessary. I am of opinion that male and female voices may be found in this kingdom capable of everything that is requisite; and, I am sure, a species of dramatic opera might be invented, that, by reconciling reason and dignity with musick and fine machinery, would charm the ear and hold fast the heart together. I am so much a stranger to the nature of your present engagements, that if what I have said should not be so practicable as I conceive it, you will have the goodness to impute it to the zeal with which I wish you at the head of a design as solid and imperishable as your musick and memory.

"I am, sir, your most obedient and obliged servant,
"A. Hill."

Handel set to work, therefore, not on English opera—this had already been attempted by others, and had failed—but on a new oratorio. A French drama on the subject of *Deborah* was utilised by Humphrey for the poem. His attention had been called to it by a setting of the song of "Deborah and Barak" by Dr Greene which had been recently performed. *Deborah*

Handel finished the oratorio *Deborah* on February 21, 1733. It is in several respects a remarkable work. Thus, the overture instead of being, as was usually the case, entirely unconnected with the work, contained the music of one of the choruses in praise of Baal; while another portion of it forestalls the chorus of Israelites in answer to the Baal chorus. The opening number is a double chorus, as grand as any in *Israel in Egypt*. It is accompanied by three trumpets, three horns, two organs,

and two harpsichords, in addition to the usual strings and oboes. There is also another double chorus, and one in six parts. Strada sang the part of Deborah. The prices were raised to a guinea for the boxes and half a guinea for the gallery. The *Daily Journal* announced on March 17: "By His Majesty's command, *Deborah*, an oratorio or sacred drama in English, composed by Mr Handel. The house to be fitted up and illuminated in a new and particular manner; and to be performed by a great number of the best voices and instruments. *N.B.*—This is the last dramatick performance that will be exhibited at the King's Theatre till after Easter."

But the work did not draw. The high price of the tickets was partly responsible for this, and it was lowered for the three or four subsequent performances. The cabal which had been long formed against Handel became more active. The strong feeling of animosity will be judged from a letter written by Paolo Rolli, the librettist of some of Handel's earlier operas, and the Italian Secretary of the Royal Academy, to the editor of the *Craftsman*, of which we give some extracts:

Hostility against Oratorio

"A New Opera Scheme."

"As I know your zeal for liberty, I thought I could not address better than to give you the following exact account of the noble stand lately made by the polite part of the world in defence of their liberties and properties, against the open attack and bold attempts of Mr H——l upon both. . . . The rise and progress of Mr H——'s power and fortune are too well known for me now to relate. Let it suffice to say, that he has grown so

insolent upon the sudden and undeserved increase of both, that he thought nothing ought to oppose his imperious and extravagant will. He had for some time governed the operas, and modelled the orchestra, without the least control. No voices, no instruments, were admitted but such as flattered his ears, though they shocked those of the audience. Wretched scrapers were put above the best hands in the orchestra; no music but his own was to be allowed, though everybody was weary of it; and he had the impudence to assert that there was no composer in England but himself. Even kings and queens[1] were to be content with whatever low characters he was pleased to assign them, as is evident in the case of Signor Montagnana, who, though a king, is always obliged to act (except in an angry, rumbling song or two) the most insignificant part of the whole drama. This excess and abuse of power soon disgusted the town: his government grew odious, and his operas empty.

"However, this, instead of humbling him, only made him more furious and desperate. He resolved to make one last effort to establish his power and fortune by force, since he found it now impossible to hope it from the goodwill of mankind. In order to do this, he formed a plan without consulting any of his friends (if he has any), and declared that at a proper season he would communicate it to the public; assuring us, the very same time, that it would be very much for the advantage of the publick in general, and of operas in particular. Some people suspect that he had settled it previously with Signora Strada del Po, who is much in his favour: but all that I can advance with certainty is that he had concerted it with a brother

[1] *i.e.* Principal singers.

of his own,[1] in whom he places a most undeserved confidence.

"His scheme set forth in substance that the decay of operas was owing to their cheapness, and to the great frauds committed by the doorkeepers: that the annual subscribers were a parcel of rogues, and made an ill-use of their tickets by often running two into the gallery: that to obviate these abuses, he had contrived a thing that was better than an opera, called an oratorio, to which none should be admitted but by printed permits, or tickets of one guinea each, which should be distributed out of warehouses of his own, and by officers of his own naming, which officers could not reasonably be supposed to cheat in the collection of half-guineas; and lastly, that, as the being of operas depended upon him singly, it was just that the profit arising from hence should be for his own benefit. He added, indeed, one condition, to varnish the whole a little, which was, that if any person should think himself aggrieved, he should be at liberty to appeal to three judges of musick, who should be obliged within the space of seven years at farthest, finally to determine the same, provided the said judges should be of his nomination, and known to like no other musick but his. This extravagant scheme disgusted the whole town. Many of the most constant attenders of the operas resolved to renounce them, rather than go to them under such extortion and vexation. They exclaimed against the insolent and rapacious projector of this plan. The kings, old and sworn servants of the two theatres of Drury Lane and Covent Garden, reaped the benefit of this general

[1] Either Smith the elder, who was devoted to him, or his brother manager, Heidegger.

discontent, and were resorted to by crowds in the way of opposition to the oratorio. Even the fairest breasts were fired with indignation against this new imposition.

"Assemblies, cards, tea, coffee, and all other female batteries were vigorously employed to defeat the project, and destroy the projector. These joint endeavours of all ranks and sexes succeeded well; and the projector had the mortification to see but a very thin audience at his oratorios; and of about two hundred and sixty odd that it consisted of, it is notorious that not ten paid for their permits, but, on the contrary, had them given them, and money into the bargain, for coming to keep him in countenance. This accident, they say, has thrown him into a deep melancholy, interrupted sometimes by raving fits, in which he fancies he sees ten thousand opera devils coming to tear him to pieces; then he breaks out into frantic incoherent speeches, muttering, *sturdy beggars*, *assassination*, etc.

"It is much questioned whether he will recover; at least if he does it is not doubted but he will seek for a retreat in his own country, from the general resentment of the town."

The letter ends with an epigram in which Handel is represented as combining with Walpole to *excise* the whole nation, for "of what use are the sheep if the shepherd can't shear 'em?"

But the opposition was not confined to scurrilous letters such as the above: tea parties were given during Lent, an unheard-of practice, the evenings being purposely selected on which oratorios were announced, with the express object of attracting the audience away from Handel's music, and no efforts were spared to actively oppose him.

Handel is caricatured

Goupy, drawing master to the Prince of Wales, and scene painter, attacked Handel by a caricature,[1] under the title of "The Charming Brute." The story goes, that Handel invited Goupy to dine with him at his house in Brook Street, but left him alone after dinner: Goupy, looking out of a back window, saw his host in another room, writing, and surrounded by fruit and wine. Whereupon he went home and drew the pastel, which was reproduced with slight variations, and had a wide circulation. Handel is represented in the form of a fat hog, seated on a beer barrel and playing on an organ, to which are attached a ham and a fowl. The floor is strewn with oyster shells, and a turbot rests on a pile of books. At his feet are some musical instruments, and a scroll bearing the words "Pension, Benefit, Nobility, Friendship." Æsop, standing behind the organ, holds a mirror to him that he may see what he is like. On his head is an owl, and behind him are wine bottles. Below are the words:

> "The figure's odd—yet who would think
> Within this tunn of meat and drink,
> There dwells a soul of soft desires,
> And all that harmony inspires?
>
> "Can contrast such as this be found
> Upon the globe's extensive round?
> There can—yon hogshead is his seat,
> His soul devotion is—to eat."

He was accused of profanity because he caused Bible words to be sung in the theatre! No efforts, however

[1] There are three variations of this pastel; the original is now in the possession of Dr W. H. Cummings, Principal of the Guildhall Music School.

mean, however scurrilous, were spared by his enemies to ruin and disgrace him. But his obstinate Saxon nature rose superior to everything. Though eventually ruined in health, in fortune, and with his mind on the verge of giving way, he still, like Sir Richard Grenville, "fought on," not knowing when he was beaten, till he finally overcame his enemies.

Deborah was repeated in March and April 1733, with the boxes reduced to half-a-guinea and the gallery to five shillings. Though, like *Esther*, it was performed without action, the reporters of the period were so little accustomed to the novelty, that they record that the King and Princess went to the Haymarket to "see the opera of *Deborah*," and refer to *Esther* "as it is now acted at the Theatre Royal." Besides these two oratorios, *Orlando* and *Floridante* were performed again this season, and Handel had the assistance of Senesino, Strada, Negri, and Bertolli, in the oratorios, if not in the operas. Moreover, the King and the Court always warmly supported him.

Chapter IX

Handel goes to Oxford—Prejudice of some of the Dons against the "Foreigner"—Popularity of his music at Oxford—He refuses the degree of Doctor in Music offered him—Further efforts to ruin him—Handel in conflict with the aristocracy—Collapse of Bononcini—Arbuthnot's satire in defence of Handel—*Arianna*—Carestini comes to England—The engagement with Heidegger ends—Handel engages a smaller theatre—*Alexander's Feast*—*Arminius*—*Giustino*—Handel is bankrupt—Simultaneous collapse of the rival opera-house.

In June 1733 Handel went to Oxford, having been invited by Dr Holmes, the Vice-Chancellor of that University.

A visit to Oxford

Thomas Hearne of St Edmund's Hall, one of those to whom music did not appeal, and who therefore took upon himself to despise the art and its professors, gives the following account of the visit:—

"1733, July 5. One Handell, a foreigner (who, they say, was born at Hanover), being desired to come to Oxford, to perform in musick at this Act,[1] in which he hath great skill, is come down, the Vice-Chancellor (Dr Holmes) having requested him so to do, and, as an encouragement, to allow him the benefit of the Theater, both before the Act begins, and after it. Accordingly he hath published papers for a performance to-day, at 5s. a ticket. This performance began a little after five o'clock in the evening. This is an innovation. The players might as well be permitted to come and act."

[1] A University ceremony.

At Oxford

"July 6th. The players being denied coming to Oxford by the Vice-Chancellor, and that very rightly, tho' they might as well have been here as Handell and his lowsy crew, a great number of forreign fidlers, they went to Abbington, and yesterday began to act there, at which were present many gownsmen from Oxford.

"July 8. Half-an-hour after five o'clock yesterday in the afternoon, was another performance, at 5s. a ticket, in the Theater by Mr Handell for his own benefit, continuing till about eight o'clock.

"*N.B.*—His book (not worth 1d.) he sells for 1s."

Another account says:

"Thursday, the 5th of July. About five o'clock the great Mr Handel shewed away with his Esther, an oratorio, or sacred drama, to a very numerous audience, at five shillings a ticket.

"Saturday, the 7th. The Chevalier Handel very judiciously, forsooth, ordered out tickets for his Esther this evening again.

"Some of the company that found themselves but very scamblingly entertained at our dry disputations, took it into their heads to try how a little fiddling would sit upon them.

"Such as cou'dn't attend before, squeezed in with as much alacrity as others strove to get out, so that ere his myrmidons cou'd gain their posts, he found that he had little likelihood to be at such a loss for a house as, once upon a time, folk say he was.

"So that, notwithstanding the barbarous and inhuman combination of such a parcel of unconscionable chaps, he disposed, it seems, of most of his tickets, and had, as you may guess, a pretty mottley appearance into the bargain."

The *Utrecht Te Deum* and *Jubilate* were performed on Sunday, July 8th, at the University Church, and on the following Tuesday "the company in the evening were entertained with a spick and span new oratorio called *Athaliah*. One of the royal and ample had been saying that, truly it was his opinion that the theater was erected for other guise purposes than to be prostituted to a company of squeeking, bawling, outlandish singsters, let the agreement be what it would. This morning, Wednesday, July 11th, there was, luckily enough, for the benefit of some of Handel's people, a serenata in their grand hall. In the evening *Athaliah* was served up again; but the next night he concluded with his oratorio *Deborah*."

Athaliah

The *Gentleman's Magazine* reports that *Athaliah* was received at Oxford "with vast applause, and before an audience of 3700 persons."

He was offered the degree of Doctor in Music on account of this oratorio. The degree fees in those days amounted to £100; and on being asked why he refused the honour, he is reported to have said, "What the devil I throw my money away for that which the blockheads wish? I no want." Chrysander, however, thinks that it was refused more courteously, and that it was offered as a mark of honour, without payment.

Handel refuses a degree

In the foregoing extracts we again come across the attitude of contempt, prejudice, and ill-will towards an art, the importance of which was not in the least understood by Oxford dignitaries, who, living within their college walls amongst nothing but books, were blind and deaf to every-

English views of Music

thing else. Not that our universities discouraged music, as far as they understood it. They have for more than 400 years given degrees in music, and in music only, to persons who are not connected with the university by education or residence.

But music, as understood by the Oxford and Cambridge authorities, was not an art. It consisted merely in a dry-as-dust study of ancient modes, and genera, of the mathematical proportions of strings and pipes, which have no bearing on modern art at all. *Quid sit musicus?* said Boethius in 500 A.D., and he answers the question to the effect that a musician is one who knows the mathematical theory of sound; composers and performers who are merely guided by their genius are only artisans, and are not really musicians; and our universities, in 1733, endorsed this antiquated view.

Dr Holmes was evidently a man in advance of his time. He risked odium and abuse to obtain an honour for his university, by getting the greatest composer of the day to pay it a visit, and he had his reward in the undoubted popularity of the music given by Handel.

Third visit to Italy

After the Oxford visit Handel went to Italy with Smith to engage a new company. He heard Farinelli and Carestini, but only engaging the latter, opened the new season with him and Scalzi, the two Negris (sisters), and Durastanti. He had previously engaged Montagnana, who was under contract to sing at Oxford for him, and for whom he had written the part of Joad the High Priest in *Athaliah*; but Montagnana deserted him at the last moment and went over to the rival company. Strada remained faithful throughout.

Further efforts to ruin Handel

The Duke of Marlborough and the Prince of Wales now set themselves to work with all their power to ruin Handel. The Prince of Wales had no particular object in so doing other than to show his dislike to his father, who had always been a supporter of Handel. The Duke of Marlborough and the "Nobiltà Brittanica," as the aristocracy were called by Rolli in the dedication of his librettos, were supporting Bononcini in every possible way. The Duchess of Marlborough had given him, besides the pension of £500 a year, a house in her stable-yard at St James', and had two concerts every week, in which no music but his was performed. Moreover, she helped him with the publication of his *Cantate e Duetti* by obtaining subscribers for him, and he made £1000 by the transaction. The fundamental cause of the quarrel (though not recognised) lay in the gradual change that was coming over the position of the art of music in the social world. It had been a mere amusement, and its professors were glad to obtain the "patronage" of the great. But the more advanced of its exponents were beginning to chafe under this indignity, and to assert their rights as free men, who resented the patronage of those who were their inferiors in intellect, however they might be their superiors by wealth and social position. The Bach family afford several instances of this upholding of the dignity of the musical profession in Germany, and Handel was now doing the same in England. The aristocracy resented the so-called insolence of a mere musician who stood upon his dignity. The quarrel came to a climax in Handel's case, and he eventually won the

Reason of the quarrel between Handel and the aristocracy

day; but Mozart after him had to endure much from the same cause, while everyone knows that the battle had been won in the time of Beethoven, who would bow to no one, and who was always treated with respect, in spite of his undoubtedly unpolished manners.

Senesino, as we have seen, deserted Handel in favour of the opera of the nobility. He foresaw the coming ruin of the Handel-Heidegger partnership; he also saw that the oratorio with which it was being attempted to replace opera, owing to its preponderance of choruses, put the chief singer more or less in the shade. Handel was very angry at the desertion, and said that he should never again sing in his theatre.

It was thought that Senesino himself hired the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and the two theatres were referred to as "Haymarket, Handel's House," and "Opera, Lincoln's Inn Fields, Senesino's House."

Efforts were now made to force Handel to re-engage Senesino, in spite of his having distinctly said he would never allow him to sing for him again.

Handel cannot be browbeaten into obedience

To give way on this point would be to allow himself to be beaten by the aristocracy, and his proud spirit could not brook such a defeat. His patrons became indignant against the "arrogant man," and having given up their boxes at the Haymarket at the end of the 1833 season, they hired the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and began to seek singers from abroad. They succeeded in getting Cuzzoni, Montagnana, and Farinelli.

The rival company

It is a curious fact that at this time while male sopranos were very much in fashion, basses were thought little of, and tenors were rarely employed. Senesino became one of the chief attrac-

tions of the new opera company, while Handel engaged Carestini, an artificial contralto of great reputation.

Fall of Bononcini

Handel's rival, Bononcini, was, however, destined to write no operas for the new company. In 1731 a member of the Academy had received from Venice a book of compositions by Antonio Lotti, who was at that time organist of St Marks, and had selected from it a five-part madrigal, *In una siepe ombrosa*, for performance. This madrigal was at once recognised as having been produced four years previously at the Academy by Dr Greene as a composition by Bononcini. Correspondence with Lotti ensued, which resulted in his proving to the satisfaction of all except Greene that he was the composer; and Bononcini, being unable or unwilling to answer the charge of plagiarism brought against him, fell into disgrace, and quitted England in 1733 never to return.

The newly established "opera of the nobility" having engaged Arrigoni and Porpora as composers, opened with *Ariadne* by Porpora on December 29, 1733. The rehearsal had taken place at the Prince of Wales' house, "where were present a great concourse of nobility and quality."

Semiramis

Handel opened on the King's birthday, October 30th, 1733, with *Semiramis*; the royal ball was given up for this occasion, and the King and Court, and even the hostile Prince of Wales, attended the opera. This was followed by *Caius Fabricius*, in which Carestini made his first appearance, and in January by *Arbaces*. These were pasticcios,[1] arranged by Smith from the music of various composers, the words being written in by

Caius Fabricius

Arbaces

[1] *Pasticcio*, It. = a medley.

Handel. On the occasion of the marriage of Princess Anne of England to the Prince of Orange, Handel produced at the Haymarket a serenata called *Parnasso in Festa*, treating of the marriage of Thetis and Peleus, "being an essay in several different sorts of harmony." The modern newspaper puff is by no means a new invention, for we find in the *Daily Journal* an announcement that "People have been waiting with impatience for this piece, the celebrated Mr Handel having exerted his utmost skill in it." The performance was attended by the King and Queen, the Prince of Wales, who was now on friendly terms with his father, and the rest of the Royal Family, with the Prince of Orange. The music was mostly adapted from *Athaliah* to Italian words, while later on some of the original music of *Parnasso* was introduced into that oratorio. On the same occasion, besides an anthem, of which the music was copied from *Athaliah* by Smith, Handel writing in the new words, a Chandos anthem was performed at the Chapel Royal.

Parnasso in Festa

Between January and June 1734 there were performed at the King's Theatre *Ariadne*, *Deborah*, *Sosarme*, *Acis*, and *Pastor Fido*, the last with large additions. In this year also were published the *Oboe Concertos*.

Handel found a good friend in Dr Arbuthnot, who helped to fight his battles for him. In 1734 he published *Harmony in an Uproar: a Letter to Frederick Handel, Esq.*, in which the composer is summoned to appear on trial to answer to the charges of certain misdemeanours. "Imprimis, you are charged with having bewitched us for the space of twenty years past. Secondly, you have most insolently dared to give us good musick and harmony,

Arbuthnot fights for Handel

when we wanted and desired bad. Thirdly, you have most feloniously and arrogantly assumed to yourself an uncontrolled property of pleasing us, whether we would or no; and have often been so bold as to charm us when we were positively resolved to be out of humour.

. . . . . .

"Have you taken your degrees? Are you a doctor? A fine composer, indeed, and not a graduate. . . . Why, Dr Pushpin (Pepusch) and Dr Blue (Greene) laugh at you, and scorn to keep you company. . . . You have made such musick as never man did before you, nor, I believe, never will be thought of again when you are gone," etc., etc.

Arianna

On May 18, 1734, Handel gave *Pastor Fido*, "intermixed with choruses, the scenery after a particular manner." This was performed fourteen times, and on July 26th *Arianna*, a new opera, the libretto by Francis Colman, was produced with Carestini in the part of Theseus. The season was not successful, but Handel bravely struggled on. His engagement with Heidegger came to an end on July 6th, 1734, and his adversaries took advantage of this to engage the King's Theatre.

The engagement with Heidegger ends

A new undertaking

Handel at once went into partnership with Rich at the smaller and less convenient theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields for the next season. The rival company had endeavoured to obtain the services of Hasse, who was then at Dresden. He said "then Handel is dead," and when he heard that this was not the case, refused to come to London to put himself in competition with so great a man, though he was afterwards persuaded to do so. They company produced operas by Hasse, Porpora, and several others; but London could

not support one opera, much less two, and the inevitable result was the final ruin of both.

After concluding the agreement with Rich, Handel paid a visit to the country, probably for his health's sake, and on October 5th he began the new season with *Arianna* at the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre. On November 9th Handel and Rich moved to the fine new theatre which had just been completed in Covent Garden, where *Pastor Fido* was revived, with a "Prologue" called *Terpsichore*, as an opening piece for the new theatre. This was a kind of ballet, in which Apollo invites Terpsichore (Mademoiselle Sallé, a famous dancer) to dance.

Terpsichore

A pasticcio, *Orestes*, with dances, followed on December 18th, and on January 8th, 1735, a new opera, *Ariodante*, followed. Yet another important opera, *Alcina*, was produced on April 16th, which continued till the end of the season on July 2nd. During Lent the theatre was used for oratorios on Wednesdays and Fridays, when no opera might be given. *Esther* was re-arranged, *Athaliah* was performed for the first time in London, and Handel began the practice of playing organ concertos between the acts of the oratorios.

Ariodante
Alcina

The opera of the nobility was now beginning to experience adversity. Cuzzoni disappeared, but they still struggled on. Oratorio was tried by Porpora, who produced his *David and Bathsheba* without success.

In 1735 Handel was in correspondence with Charles Jennens, a very wealthy amateur poet, of Gopsall in Leicestershire, about the words of an oratorio which the latter seems to have been preparing for him, and incidentally mentions that he was going to Tonbridge, probably for his health, which

Charles Jennens

was now giving way. The oratorio in question is supposed to have been *Saul*.

Matheson wrote to him in 1735 asking particulars of Handel's career for his "Ehrenpforte." Handel answered on July 29, thanking him and saying that "it would be impossible for me to recall the events of my past life, since continual application to the service of this court and nobility prevents me from giving my attention to other matters." Matheson thereupon said he believed Handel thought that Matheson expected a present from him.

Alexander's Feast

Carestini now left London to fulfil engagements in Venice, and Handel set to work on a new English work, *Alexander's Feast*, arranged for musical setting by his friend, Newburgh Hamilton, from Dryden's ode. This was completed in January 1730, and performed without action at Covent Garden on February 10th, the songs being sung by Beard, the English tenor; Erard, a bass; Miss Young, afterwards the wife of Arne; and Strada. The ode had been arranged many years before by Newburgh Hamilton for Clayton, whose music was performed in York Buildings in 1711. Clayton's music had been a failure, but Handel's attracted no less than thirteen hundred persons, while the receipts amounted to £450.

Walsh, the publisher

Walsh died on March 13th, 1730, leaving to his children either £20,000 or £30,000 according to different accounts. He was a man of little education, but he had a keen scent where money was to be made by publishing popular musical works. If he could not publish them with the composer's partnership, he simply pillaged them, a proceeding which probably paid better, as he would then reap the

whole instead of half the profits. His son, who continued the business, published for Handel. *Alexander's Feast* was published by him at a subscription price of two guineas. The cost of publication was greater than that of printing the operas, on account of the choruses. It was corrected by the composer, and a print of him, "curiously engraved," was given to the subscribers and encouragers of the work; but the publication was delayed for two years, when the composer's share of the profits amounted to £200.

An unprosperous season

The season was carried on with repetitions of *Alexander's Feast*, *Esther*, *Acis*, but proved a failure, in spite of Handel's bringing over a new singer. This singer, Signor Conti, made his *début* on May 12th in *Atalanta*, which formed part of the festivities on the occasion of the marriage of Frederick, Prince of Wales, with a Princess of Saxe-Gotha.

Atalanta

Arminius *Giustino*

In 1737 *Arminius* was performed, but meeting with little favour gave way to *Giustino*, which also had little success; but Handel was not to be beaten. Finding that operas no longer attracted the public, he gave regular performances of oratorios during Lent, with new concertos for the organ and other instruments, amongst other things reviving his early Italian work, *Il Trionfo del Tempo*.

Il Trionfo del Tempo revived

Two unsuccessful operas

Two more defeats were in store for him. *Dido* and *Berenice* produced in April and May failed to please, and the blow fell. The King ceased his annual subscription of £1000. Handel had spent the whole of the £10,000, the savings of many years, with which he began his manager-

ship. He was deeply in debt, and was obliged to close his theatre. His health was entirely broken by the struggle; his mind gave way; his right arm and side became paralysed, so that he could no longer perform in public; and nervous prostration set in. The baths at Tonbridge failed to do him good, though he was a little better in May, and began again to conduct his operas. But in the end he was forced to give up and go to the baths at Aix-la-Chapelle.

Ruin

The public had in reality become indifferent to opera. The novelty had worn off, and in the same year the rival house failed with a loss of £12,000. Farinelli, Porpora, Senesino, at once quitted England, and London was left with its *Beggar's Opera*, *Polly*, and similar immoral trash, for which it had shown so strong a predilection. Covent Garden Theatre was now given over to performances of *The Dragon of Wantley*, a parody on *Giustino* by Carey, set to music by Lampe, Handel's bassoon player, in which Waltz played the part of the dragon. While Handel's finest operas were considered successful if they ran for sixteen or seventeen nights, this parody of one of them had a run of sixty-seven nights —four more than the famous *Beggar's Opera*—while its libretto went into fourteen editions in one year.

Causes of the fall of Italian opera

Chapter X

Handel returns from Aix-la-Chapelle—Is threatened with imprisonment for debt—Death of Queen Caroline—Statue in Vauxhall—Royal Society of Musicians—*Saul*—*Israel in Egypt*—St Cecilia's day—*L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato.*

HANDEL had a constitution of iron. He was with great difficulty persuaded to try the effect of the baths at Aix-la-Chapelle, but when he went there "he submitted to such sweats, excited by the vapour baths, as astonished everyone. After a few essays of this kind, during which his spirits seemed to rise rather than sink under an excessive perspiration, his disorder left him; and in a few hours after the last operation he went to the great church of the city, and got to the organ, on which he played in such a manner that men imputed his cure to a miracle. Having received so much benefit from the baths, he prudently determined to stay at Aix-la-Chapelle till the end of six weeks from the time of his arrival there, and at the end thereof returned to London in perfect health."[1] The *London Daily Post* mentions that "Mr Handel, the composer of Italian music, returned on November 7th (1737), greatly recovered in health."

Handel goes to Aix for his health

Handel's reputation for integrity and honesty was such

[1] Hawkins' *History of Music*, vol. v. p. 326.

that none of his creditors thought of suing him except Aurelio del Pò, the husband of Strada, who insisted on immediate payment, otherwise he would have him thrown into prison. Imprisonment for debt in those days was something too terrible to contemplate. The victims were confined in the Fleet, or some other place, where, if they did not become insane, they lived on charity, or starved to death, without a chance of earning a livelihood, much less of paying their debts.

Imprisonment for debt threatened

His six weeks' rest seemed to infuse new vigour into him. He found on his return that Heidegger had opened the Haymarket on his own account, and on November 15th he began writing an opera for him called *Faramondo*. Queen Caroline died on the 20th, and he had to compose an anthem for her funeral. This was performed in the Chapel of Henry VII. The score of "The Ways of Zion do Mourn" occupies eighty pages of print, and was composed in five days. Another five days were occupied in copying, rehearsing, and performing it. The choirs of the Chapel Royal, Westminster Abbey, St Paul, and Windsor took part, and there were one hundred instrumentalists and eighty vocalists.

Faramondo

Funeral anthem

The death of the Queen delayed the production of *Faramondo* to January 1738. It was a failure, and Handel tried with equally bad success a pasticcio, *Alexander Severus*, and a comic opera, *Serse* or *Xerxes*. But the tide was now at its lowest. The threat of Del Pò caused a reaction in Handel's favour. The public admired his courage, and had an immense esteem for his character, and his friends persuaded him

Serse

to give a "benefit concert" much against his will. This was advertised as an "Oratorio," but it in reality consisted of a number of extracts from his favourite works in the form of an ordinary concert. He also played a concerto on the organ; and the theatre being crowded, seats were placed upon the stage, and were occupied by no less than five hundred persons of rank. Everyone seemed to wish to do the master honour, and the receipts, estimated by Burney at £800, and by Mainwaring at £1500, were amply sufficient to pay off Del Pò.

Del Pò's claims satisfied

A month later a statue was erected to him in Vauxhall Gardens by Jonathan Tyers, the lessee of that place of entertainment. This statue, which was acknowledged to be an excellent likeness, was the first important work of Roubiliac, and established his reputation. Handel gave many sittings for it, and the cost was £300. It was placed in a niche specially prepared for it, and on May 2nd was unveiled at a great concert of Handel's music, which was attended by a very large audience.

A statue of the composer is erected

After passing through many hands it came into the possession of Mr Alfred Littleton, the present owner.

Handel's music was very popular at Vauxhall and other public places. The following anecdote appears in the "History of the Parish of Marylebone":[1] "While Marylebone Gardens were flourishing, the enchanting music of Handel, and probably of Arne, was often heard from the orchestra there. One evening, as my grandfather and Handel were walking together and alone, a new piece was struck up by the band. 'Come, Mr Fountayne,' said

[1] Smith, 1833.

Handel, 'let us sit down and listen to this piece. I want to know your opinion of it.' Down they sat, and after some time the old parson, turning to his companion, said, 'It is not worth listening to—it's very poor stuff.' 'You are right, Mr Fountayne,' said Handel; 'it is very poor stuff. I thought so myself when I had just finished it.' The old gentleman, being taken by surprise, was beginning to apologise, but Handel assured him there was no necessity, that the music was really bad, having been composed hastily and his time for the production limited, and that the opinion given was as correct as it was honest."[1]

Besides Walsh, who had the engraving (p. 97) made, Handel could reckon amongst his admirers Pope, Fielding, Hogarth, Smollett, Gay, Arbuthnot, Colley Cibber, Hughes, etc., while all his operas were published, whether they were successful or not. George II. made a point of attending all the performances of his oratorios, even when the audiences were very thin. "What, my Lord," said someone to Lord Chesterfield, who was seen coming out of Covent Garden Theatre one evening, "is there not an oratorio?" "Yes," said Lord Chesterfield; "they are now performing, but I thought it best to retire, lest I should disturb the King in his privacy." Princess Anne, who married the Prince of Orange, took Handel's part, and the Prince of Wales ceased to be hostile to him.

Origin of the Royal Society of Musicians

One of the results of the Italian opera was that many musicians, foreign and English, were attracted by the possibilities of reward to settle in London. The profession naturally became overcrowded; the weaker members, the old and infirm, the families of those who died,

[1] Letter from the Rev. J. Fountayne.

were pushed out of the competition, and found themselves in a starving condition.

Amongst the numerous oboe players who were thus attracted was one named Kytch, who had come from Germany, but becoming unable to support himself, he had died of starvation in the street, while his two young sons made a miserable living by driving milch asses. Festing, a violinist, afterwards leader of the orchestra at Ranelagh Gardens, struck with pity at the sight of these boys, after raising a subscription to relieve the immediate wants of the family, induced Dr Greene to help him to organise a permanent fund for the relief of similar cases. They were immediately joined by Handel, Dr Boyce, Dr Arne, Christopher Smith, Carey, Edward Purcell (son of the great Purcell), Leveridge, Dr Greene, Dr Pepusch, and others, who in 1738 established a "Fund for the support of Decayed Musicians and their Families." Out of this grew the present Royal Society of Musicians of Great Britain. Handel, it will be seen, came forward at a time when he was in monetary distress himself to help others who were more unfortunate, and sank all his differences with Greene, Arne, etc., in the cause of charity. How nobly he continued to support the "Fund" for the rest of his life, will appear in the course of this history.

On March 20, 1739, *Alexander's Feast* was performed with various concertos for the organ and a new concerto specially composed for the benefit of the Fund for Poor Musicians. This took place at the Haymarket Theatre. Not only was the house full, but many gave subscriptions over and above the price of the tickets. Heidegger gave £20, and Handel gave the theatre and his own services.

He could do no more. He was still deeply in debt, and he gave his services in circumstances under which he could quite reasonably have claimed some of the profits for himself.

Failure of Heidegger

Heidegger failed in 1738. He had advertised that he would continue the opera if two hundred subscribers came forward; but they did not, and London was now without an opera.

Handel published the first six organ concertos in September 1738. "To all lovers of music: whereas there are six concertos for the organ by Mr Handel published this day, some of which have been already printed by Mr Walsh, and the others done without the knowledge or consent of Mr Handel: this is to give notice, that the same six are printing, and will be published in a few days, corrected by the author.—J. WALSH."

In 1739 Handel took the Haymarket Theatre for the performance of oratorio twice a week, and from this time he gave twelve performances every year during Lent.

Saul

The first oratorio he gave here was *Saul*, which had occupied him from July 3rd to September 27th, 1738. It contains the longest of Handel's overtures. At the end of the second of the four movements, the organ, which is used throughout as a solo instrument, is given an empty space in the score, marked *Organo ad libitum*. Here Handel gave an extempore performance; and the third movement, a fugue, contains brilliant organ solo passages. The oratorio was performed "with several new concertos on the organ," but some numbers are marked in the book of words to be omitted.

Israel in Egypt

Israel in Egypt

On April 4th, 1739, *Israel in Egypt* was performed "with several new concertos on the organ." This work had been composed in twenty-seven days during the previous year. It does not seem to have been successful, and was repeated on the 11th "in a shortened form, intermixed with songs." These songs were Italian ballads; and the oratorio was preceded at both performances by the "Funeral Anthem" as a lamentation for the death of Joseph. The audience, accustomed to a lighter form of art, could not tolerate the succession of massive eight part choruses. A letter, however, appeared in the *London Daily Post* from one of the audience, begging for a repetition of the work, and shortly afterwards, a paragraph—"We are informed that Mr Handel, at the desire of several persons of distinction, intends to perform again his last new oratorio of *Israel in Egypt* on Tuesday next, the 17th inst." It had thus three performances in its first year; and a fourth was advertised, but was given up. "This day, the last new oratorio called *Saul*, and not *Israel in Egypt*, as by mistake was advertised in yesterday's bills and papers; with a concerto on the organ by Mr Handel, and another on the violin, by the famous Signor Piantanida, who is just arrived from abroad." It had one performance in 1740, "with a new concerto for several instruments, and a concerto on the organ," and then was shelved till 1756.

In *Israel* Handel did not use a text by a modern writer, but chose words from Scripture itself. The second part was written first, and called "Moses' Song, Exodus, chapter xv." The first, or historical part, was added afterwards. On the supposed borrowings in this work, we will speak later. It was performed by the

Academy of Ancient Music, on May 10th, 1739, under the title "The Song of Moses and the Funeral Anthem for her late Majesty, set to music by Mr Handel," and it was also given in Oxford.

A pasticcio, *Jupiter in Argos*, composed in April 1739, was advertised for May 1st, but it is doubtful whether the performance ever took place.

Ode for St Cecilia's day

In November, Handel was again in the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, when "a new ode, with two new concertos for several instruments, preceded by *Alexander's Feast*, and a concerto on the organ, "were announced for St Cecilia's day, November 22nd, 1739. It was also announced that "the passage from the fields to the house will be covered for better conveniency."

The words of the "new ode" were by Dryden. St Cecilia's day was at that time honoured by musical performances on a grand scale, which had been first instituted by Purcell and his master, Dr Blow. They took the form of concerts in the theatres, or a performance of the *Te Deum* in cathedrals and churches. Purcell's *Te Deum and Jubilate in D* were composed for a performance in honour of St Cecilia in 1694. Cecilia societies were founded in most of the important towns in England, and odes were written by the best poets. Thus Dryden wrote *Alexander's Feast, or the Power of Music* and an *Ode on St Cecilia's Day*, and Pope, who, though having no ear for music, was not so crass as not to respect an art so closely allied to his own, wrote a fine *Ode on St Cecilia's Day*, in praise of music, which Greene set to music as his Doctor's exercise. Pope, who had a genuine admiration for Handel's

genius, wished him to set this ode, and employed Belchier, a friend of both, to negotiate. But Handel would have nothing to do with it, saying, "It is the very thing my bellows-blower has set already for a Doctor's degree at Cambridge." Christopher Smith asked why Pope, who was absolutely insensible to music, had praised Handel in his *Dunciad*; Pope said, "That merit in every branch of science ought to be encouraged; that the extreme illiberality with which many persons had joined to ruin Handel, in opposing his operas, called forth his indignation; and though nature had denied his being gratified by Handel's uncommon talents in the musical line, yet when his powers were generally acknowledged, he thought it incumbent on him to pay a tribute due to genius."

Pope one day asked Arbuthnot, of whose knowledge in music he had a high idea, what was his real opinion in regard to Handel as a master of that science. The doctor immediately replied, "Conceive the highest that you can of his abilities, and they are much beyond anything that you can conceive."

In February 1740 there was a great frost, and we read that "In consideration of the weather continuing so cold, the serenata called *Acis and Galatea* will be put off for a few nights further, of which due notice will be given." Opera seems now to have entirely given way to oratorio, for the season was occupied with several performances each of *Alexander's Feast*, *Ode on St Cecilia's Day*, *Acis*, *L'Allegro*, *Saul*, *Esther*, and *Israel in Egypt*. There were published during the season, *Seven sonatas* or *Trios* op. 5^{a}; and *Twelve grand concertos* in seven parts, for four violins, a tenor and violoncello, with a thorough-bass for the harpsichord op. 6^{a}. The latter was sold to subscribers

at two guineas, and was under "His Majesty's royal licence and protection."

Another unsuccessful season

The season again proved unsuccessful, yet Handel, in spite of his troubles and his debts, gave a performance on March 28th of *Acis* and Dryden's Ode "for the Musical Fund benefit." The bitter persecution of his enemies continued, and extended even to tearing down his play-bills as fast as he could put them up. But he must have received some consolation in the efforts of poets to sing the praise of the man who had gone through so much, and had borne himself so well in the fight. Newburgh Hamilton writes—

"To Mr Handel on his setting to musick Mr Dryden's 'Feast of Alexander.'

"Let others charm the list'ning scaly brood,
Or tame the savage monsters of the wood;
With magick notes enchant the leafy grove,
Or force ev'n things inanimate to move:
Be ever your's (my friend) the god-like art
To calm the passions, and improve the heart;
. . . . . .
That artist's hand (whose skill alone could move
To glory, grief, or joy, the Son of Jove)
Not greater raptures to the Grecian gave,
Than British Theatres from you receive:
That Ignorance and Envy vanquished see;
Heav'n made, you rule the world by Harmony.
. . . . . .
Had Dryden lived, the welcome day to bless
Which cloth'd his numbers in so fit a dress;

Last Opera

When his Majestic Poetry was crowned
With all your bright magnificence of sound ;
How would his wonder and his transport rise ?
Whilst famed Timotheus yields to you the prize."

Handel's last Opera

Handel found it hard to entirely give up his beloved Opera. On November 22, 1740, he produced *Imeneo* or *Hymen*, which was withdrawn after two representations, and his last opera, *Deidamia*, was performed three times in January and February 1741. After this he withdrew from Opera for ever.

L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato

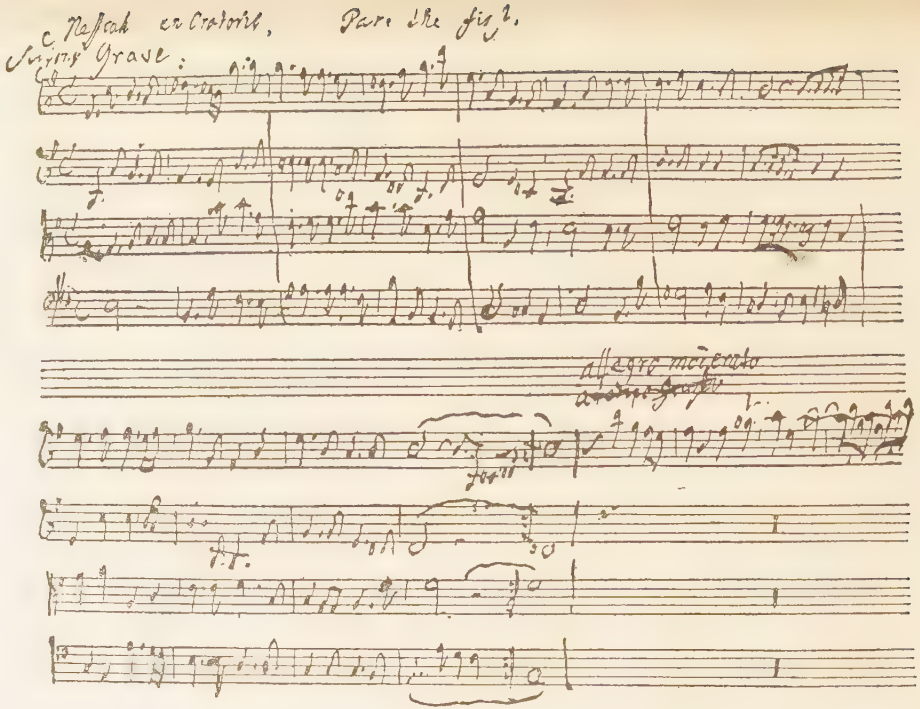
L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato, the words of the first two by Milton, the third by Charles Jennens, was given in the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre, "with two new concertos for several instruments, and a new concerto on the organ," on February 27, 1740. Some of its songs were published by Walsh on March 15th at four shillings, and a second collection of the songs was published in May at three shillings, the two collections containing the whole of the songs in the three parts.

Chapter XI

The Messiah—Handel goes to Dublin—Is received with great enthusiasm—Returns to London—*Samson*—The hostility continues—*Semele*—"Dettingen' *Te Deum*—*Joseph*—*Belshazzar*—*Hercules*—Lord Middlesex's opposition company—Handel is bankrupt again—He continues the struggle—*Judas Maccabæus*—Handel's music is used against him—*Joshua*—*Solomon*—*Susanna*—*Fire Music*—Handel is made a governor of the Foundling Hospital—*Theodora*.

The Messiah

In 1741 Charles Jennens, who had now become one of Handel's most intimate friends, selected for him from Scripture the words of an oratorio on the subject of the "Messiah." Handel had been invited by the Duke of Devonshire, the Viceroy of Ireland, to pay a visit to Dublin, where many performances of his works had taken place, and where he was held in great esteem. He therefore resolved to offer the *Messiah*, on which he was engaged, "to that generous and polite nation" (Ireland) in aid of certain charitable societies, for every charitable work interested him. We learn by the autograph score in Buckingham Palace that it was begun on August 22nd, 1741, that the first part was finished on August 28th, the second part on September 6th, the third on September 12th, and that the "filling in" was completed by September 14th. The composition of the whole, therefore, occupied twenty-two days!

He is supposed to have left London about November

Facsimile of Handel's MS., first page of *The Messiah*.

4th or 5th. Burney, who was then at school at Chester, relates that he saw him smoke a pipe over a dish of coffee at the Exchange Coffeehouse. He was detained at Chester (at that time the place of embarkation for Ireland) by contrary winds for several days, and during this time he applied to Mr Baker, organist of the cathedral, to know if there were any choir men who could sing at sight, for he wished to try some of the choruses which he intended to perform in Ireland. A time was appointed at the "Golden Falcon" Inn, where Handel was staying. But alas! on trial of the chorus, *And with His stripes we are healed*, poor Janson (a printer, and the principal bass of the choir), after repeated attempts, failed so egregiously, that Handel let loose his great bear upon him; and, after swearing at him in four or five different languages, cried out, in broken English: "You scoundrel! did you not tell me that you could sing at sight?" "Yes, sir," said the printer, "and so I can, but not at *first sight*."

Visit to Dublin

The account of the visit to Ireland is very interesting, and has been fully recorded by Horatio Townsend. A new concert room, capable of accommodating an audience of 600 persons, had recently been erected in Fishamble Street, then a fashionable quarter. Here took place the meetings of the Musical Academy, an amateur society consisting of members of the aristocracy only. Lord Mornington[1] was the president and leader of the band; Lord Belamont and Dean Burke were violoncellists; Lord Lucan played the flute: Lady Freke, the Right

[1] Afterwards Doctor and Professor of Music at Dublin University. He was the composer of the well-known double chant in E.

Hon. W. Brownlow and Dr Quin the harpsichord. Though the meetings were mostly private, the society performed once a year for charities, when the public were admitted on payment.

Faulkner's Journal of Nov. 21, 1741, announces that "last Wednesday the celebrated Dr Handel arrived here, in the packet boat from Holyhead . . . to perform his Oratorios, for which purpose he hath engaged Mr Maclaine, his wife, and several others of the best performers in the musical way." Maclaine was an excellent organist. Later on we read, "Last Tuesday arrived in the Yacht from Park Gate, Signora Avolio, an excellent singer, who comes to this kingdom to perform in Mr Handel's musical entertainments." The *Messiah*, however, was not performed yet. Several public "entertainments" took place at the new music hall, the first being on December 23rd, at which *L'Allegro* was performed with the usual two grand concertos, and an organ concerto, and considered "superior to anything of the kind in the kingdom before." The same music was repeated in January, by command of the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire, and was followed a week later by *Acis* and other works. By this time the entertainments had become so popular that it was found necessary to regulate the traffic, to hire a convenient room for the footmen, and to make another convenient passage for (sedan-) chairs.

The choruses were sung by members of the Philharmonic Society, the Musical Academy, and such members of the choirs of both cathedrals as would give their services. Altogether eight of these concerts took place before the *Messiah* was performed, and great enthusiasm

prevailed. Handel had been naturally anxious that his works should be performed to the best advantage and, before leaving London, had stipulated that the trained choirs of the cathedrals should take part. This stipulation was agreed to by the authorities for charity concerts only, since it was found that promiscuous singing at concerts led to imaginary or real abuses. He had been some five months in Dublin, and the enthusiasm for him had reached the highest pitch when the following notice appeared in *Faulkner's Journal*, March 27th, 1742.

"For the relief of the prisoners in the several gaols, and for the support of Mercer's Hospital, and the Charitable Infirmary, on Monday the 12th of April will be performed at the Musick Hall in Fishamble Street, Mr Handel's grand new oratorio, called *The Messiah*, in which the gentlemen of the choirs of both cathedrals will assist, with some concertos on the organ by Mr Handell. Tickets to be had at the Musick Hall, and at Mr Neal's in Christ Church Yard, at half-a-guinea each. *N.B.*—No person will be admitted to the rehearsal without a rehearsal ticket, which will be given gratis with the ticket for the performance when pay'd for."

On April 10th a further notice requested the ladies to come without hoops, which they did. This enabled 700 persons to attend, and the receipts amounted to about £400, of which £127 was given to each of the three "great and pious charities."

The three Dublin papers concurred in saying, "The best judges allowed it to be the most finished piece of music. Words are wanting to express the delight it

afforded to the admiring crowded audience. The sublime, the grand, and the tender, adapted to the most elevated, majestic and moving words, conspired to transport and charm the ravished heart and ear. It is but justice to Mr Handel that the world should know he generously gave the money arising from this grand performance to be equally shared by the Society for relieving prisoners, the Charitable Infirmary and Mercer's Hospital, for which they will ever gratefully remember his name; and that the gentlemen of the two choirs, Mr Dubourg, Mrs Avolio and Mrs Cibber, who all performed their parts to admiration, acted also on the same disinterested principle."

"At the particular desire of several of the nobility and gentry" a second performance took place on June 3rd. In order to keep the room as cool as possible, a pane of glass was removed from the top of each window. This was Handel's last performance in Dublin.

On August 12th he embarked on a Chester trader, with "several other persons of distinction," to go to Parkgate, and reached London in due course.

His visit to Dublin was one of the pleasantest episodes in his stormy career. Here he found peace and, what is more to an artist, complete appreciation of his works. He fully intended to renew his acquaintance with the friendly Irish public in the following year, but events happened which prevented his ever going to Dublin again.

Handel was not certain as to his movements on his return to London. In a letter to Mr Jennens of the 9th of September he says, "The report that the direction of the opera next winter is committed to my care is

groundless. The gentlemen who have undertaken to meddle with harmony cannot agree, and are quite in a confusion. Whether I shall do something in the oratorio way (as several of my friends desire), I cannot determine as yet. Certain it is, that this time twelvemonth I shall continue my oratorios in Ireland, where they are going to make a large subscription already for that purpose."

Samson.

The *Messiah* had been completed on September 14th in the previous year, and *Samson* had been begun immediately. The first act was completed on September 29th, the second on October 11th, and the third on October 29th, 1741, but the two final pieces as the oratorio now exists were added in October 1742.

The first performance took place at Covent Garden Theatre on February 18th, 1743, the part of Samson being sung by Beard, Manoah by Savage, Micah by Mrs Cibber, and Delilah by Mrs Clive. The only foreign singer employed was Signora Avolio; and the trumpet obbligato in "Let the bright seraphim" was played by Valentine Snow. The old hostility had not quite died out. Horace Walpole writes, "Handel has set up an oratorio against the opera, and succeeds. He has hired all the goddesses from the farces, and the singers of roast beef from between the acts at both theatres, with a man with one note in his voice, and a girl without ever an one, and so they sing and make brave hallelujahs, and the good company encore the recitative, if it happens to have any cadence like what they call a tune."

Dubourg, the famous Dublin violinist, joined him, and *Faulkner's Journal* endeavoured to encourage Handel by a friendly notice; but the season again seems not to have

been very successful. *Samson* was performed eight times, the *Messiah* three times (the first performance in London was on March 23, 1743), and *L'Allegro* and the *Cecilia Ode* once each. None of the London papers seem to have noticed any of these performances; and the season was concluded with *Samson* on March 30th.

The Messiah in London

Between June 3rd and July 4th Handel wrote *Semele*, and then began the "Dettingen" *Te Deum* and *Anthem*, which were solemnly sung in the presence of George II. at St James' Chapel on November 27th, 1743, in honour of the victory of the British army under the personal command of the King over Marshall De Noailles and the Duc de Grammont at Dettingen on June 27th.

Semele Dettingen Te Deum

"By particular desire" Handel set to work to arrange for twelve subscription oratorio performances for Lent, 1744. The subscription price was four guineas, and the composer engaged to give two new oratorios, besides some of his former ones. The first of the two new works was "an English opera, but called an oratorio, and performed as such,"[1] at Covent Garden on February 10th. Its name was *Semele*. The second was *Joseph and his Brethren*, in which a pupil of Handel, Signora Galli, made her début on March 2nd. It is said that Handel's power of teaching singers was at least equal to his power of composing music for them; and every singer, however famous, improved immensely under his guidance.

A new oratorio enterprise

Joseph

Handel as a teacher

From June to October he was in correspondence with

[1] *i.e.* without action.

Jennens about a new oratorio called *Belteshazzer*, but the name was afterwards changed to its present form, *Belshazzar*. Handel found it too long. It would, he said, occupy more than four hours, though he had retrenched the music as far as possible. As Jennens would not curtail his words, Handel caused them all to be printed, but cut out some two hundred lines in the performance. It came to a hearing on March 23rd, 1745, but previously to this he had performed a "musical drama" called *Hercules*, composed during the correspondence on *Belshazzar*.

Belshazzar

Hercules

When Handel failed in 1737, a new opera company was started at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket under Lord Middlesex, who carried it on at a loss for some years.

This opposition society now failed, and Handel was therefore able to take the King's Theatre in the Haymarket again: but though unable to support a rival opera, his enemies were by no means inactive. They now took to giving balls and card parties on the nights of his oratorios, though such things had been unknown during Lent, and succeeded in making his audiences so thin that he again became insolvent, for the proceeds of his Irish visit had been devoted to the payment of his former creditors. But it was not at all in keeping with his character to give in to misfortune, and though for a second time ruined, he returned to the battle next season, reopened the King's Theatre for twenty-four subscription performances, and engaged to give two new oratorios. The subscription was to be eight guineas for

New machinations of Handel's enemies

Handel again bankrupt

a box ticket for the season, the performances to take place every Saturday till Lent, when they were to be twice a week.

A new oratorio, *Deborah*, with a concerto on the organ, was given on November 24th, and later on the *Occasional Oratorio*. Hawkins says that he frequently played to houses that would not pay his expenses; and Burney mentions a Lady Brown, who gave very fine concerts, and distinguished herself as a persevering enemy of Handel. A famous mimic and singer named Russell was engaged by certain ladies to set up a puppet show in opposition to the oratorios of Handel, but he was not properly supported, became bankrupt, and was thrown into prison, where he lost his reason. Thereupon his patronesses subscribed five pounds, on payment of which he was admitted to Bedlam, where he naturally became hopelessly mad, and died in the utmost misery. We have seen how narrowly Handel escaped the same horrible fate. Smollett, who was a friend of Handel, writes:

Deborah
Occasional Oratorio

Further hostilities

> "Again shall Handel raise his laurel'd brow,
> Again shall harmony with rapture glow;
> The spells dissolve—the combination breaks,
> And Punch, no longer Frasi's rival, squeaks.
> Lo! Russell falls a sacrifice to whim,
> And starts amaz'd, in Newgate, from his dream;
> With trembling hands implores their promis'd aid,
> And sees their favour like a vision fade!"[1]

The result of these machinations was that Handel had to close his theatre after the sixteenth performance, and was once more deeply in debt.

[1] Smollett, Satire called "Advice."

A new undertaking

But the tide was again about to turn. He resolved to attempt no more subscription performances, but to open his theatre to all comers, and not to bind himself to any definite number of works. He had become acquainted with a learned antiquarian and scholar, Thomas Morell, a Doctor of Divinity, and he now proposed to him the feats of Judas Maccabæus as a good subject for an oratorio. Morell took to the idea, provided a libretto, and Handel, setting to work on July 9th, 1746, had finished the composition by August 11th—thirty-two days. It is said that the subject had been suggested to Handel by the Prince of Wales to celebrate the return of his brother, the Duke of Cumberland, after the victory at Culloden on April 16, and the words were dedicated to the Prince by the author.

Judas Maccabæus

The oratorio appealed not only to the political feelings of the time, but the Jews flocked to hear the exploits of their national hero dramatised. The result was an immediate success; and that it was lasting is shown by the fact that Handel himself performed it thirty-eight times. Rockstro points out that in the chorus, "We never will bow down to the rude stock and sculptured stone," with its magnificent finale, "We worship God, and God alone," "Handel preached a sermon in his own resistless language to which neither Jew nor Christian could listen unmoved."

Lucius Verus, a pasticcio made up of songs pirated from various operas by Handel, was performed in 1747 at the Italian Theatre, and afterwards published by Walsh. It was found necessary to use his music and his name to attract an audience to the rival theatre, and this was not the first occasion that such measures were taken, for in 1734

his opera, *Ottone*, and in 1743, *Roxana* (another name for *Alessandro*), had been performed in the theatre that was opened for the avowed purpose of ruining him.

Alexander Balus

On June 1st, 1747, Handel commenced *Alexander Balus*, and finished it on July 4th, and on the 30th of this month he began *Joshua*, which was finished on August 19th. Dr Morell was the author of the words of both oratorios.

Alexander Balus
Joshua

In later years, Haydn, after hearing the latter work performed, said to Shield that "he had long been acquainted with music, but never knew half its powers before he heard it, as he was perfectly certain that only one inspired author ever did, or ever would, pen so sublime a composition." He particularly referred to the chorus in *Joshua*, "The nations tremble." Both works were performed at Covent Garden in March 1748.

Handel was now sixty-three years old, but he was indefatigable as ever. As soon as the season was over, he set to work on two more oratorios, *Solomon* in May and June, and *Susanna* in July and August. These two works came to a performance during the following season. The score of *Solomon* is written on all kinds of paper, from which Schœlcher concludes that Handel's affairs were still in an unsatisfactory condition, and that he could not afford to buy even the necessary music paper.

Solomon
Susanna

On October 7th, 1748, the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was signed, and Handel was called upon to provide music for the festivities that took place on April 27th, 1749. The most important item in these

Fire music

[1] The scores were usually written in oblong books of ten staves to the page.

celebrations was a display of fireworks in the Green Park. A wooden "machine" was erected 114 feet in height, and 410 feet in length, representing a Doric temple, from a design by Chevalier Servandoni. A band of 100 musicians played an "Overture" by Mr Handel, a royal salute of 101 brass cannons was fired, the fireworks commenced, and unfortunately set fire to the temple, whereby the Royal Library narrowly escaped destruction. A rehearsal of the music had previously taken place at Vauxhall Gardens, before an audience of 12,000. The crowd was so great that it blocked all wheel traffic on London Bridge for three hours, such was the power of Handel's music to attract. The composition consists of a number of short movements scored for three trumpets, three pairs of drums, three horns, three oboes, two bassoons, strings, and side drums. There were three players to each trumpet and horn part, twenty-four oboe players, twelve bassoonists, and the string and side-drum and serpent[1] players seem to have made up the number to 100 as mentioned in the papers. The work became very popular, and was frequently played at concerts.

A few days after the performance in Green Park, Handel gave a second performance of the Firework music, with

[1] This was the only work in which Handel employed the serpent, a kind of bass cornet. He did not like the tone of it, and a story is told, that one day hearing a bad player performing on it, he said, "What the devil be that?" On being told it was a serpent, he said, "Oh, the serpent; aye, but it be not the serpent that seduced Eve." The instrument has now disappeared, its place being taken by the more manageable ophicleide. Probably its latest appearance in a classical work is in the score of Mendelssohn's *St Paul*.

other pieces, in the chapel of the Foundling Hospital, in the presence of the Prince and Princess of Wales. Tickets were sold at half a guinea; the King gave £2000, an anonymous donor £50, and the proceeds were devoted to finishing the chapel. For this generosity Handel was immediately enrolled as one of the Governors and Guardians of the Hospital.[1]

Handel is made a Governor of the Foundling Hospital

In March 1750 a new oratorio—*Theodora*—was produced, "with a new concerto on the organ." It was not a success, and Handel endeavoured to fill the house by giving away tickets to professional musicians who were not performing. This led to two of them asking for tickets for a performance of the *Messiah*; whereupon Handel broke out in a rage: "Oh, your servant, Meine Herren, you are damnable dainty; you would not go to *Theodora*; there was room enough to dance there when that was perform!"

Theodora

It is rather pathetic to see how devoted Handel always remained to this unfortunate oratorio, which never attracted the public. Before one performance he said to an intimate friend: "Will you be here next Friday night? I will play it to *you*." On another occasion he heard that someone had engaged to take all the boxes, in case it was again performed; whereupon he remarked: "He is a fool; the Jews will not come to it as to *Judas Maccabæus*, because it is a Christian story; and the ladies will not come, because it is a virtuous one." Burney heard him say, when the house was very empty: "Never mind; the music will sound the better."

[1] The Foundling Hospital had been established in 1741 by Captain Coram, out of the profits of a trading vessel of which he was master.

Chapter XII

Handel gives an organ to the Foundling Hospital—*Jephtha*, his last work—He becomes blind—*Triumph of Time and Truth*—He continues to perform in public—His death—His funeral—His will—His support of the Foundling Hospital—Portraits.

HANDEL must by this time have paid off his creditors, for in 1750 he presented the Foundling Hospital with a fine organ, and opened it with a performance of the *Messiah* on May 15th. The tickets were sold at half a guinea each, and the proceeds given to the hospital. It was calculated that the chapel could hold about a thousand persons, the ladies coming without hoops, and the gentlemen without swords; yet so great was the demand for seats that Handel gave a second performance a fortnight later, to which those who had bought tickets and had not been able to find room were admitted, besides others who desired to come.

Further generosity to the Foundling Hospital

Rockstro[1] gives the specification of the organ, which is interesting as showing the kind of instrument in use at that time. It had three manuals, but no pedals. It was built by Parkes, and the natural keys were black, the

[1] P. 299.

sharps being white.[1] The compass of the Great and Choir was from GG to E in alt, that of the Swell from Fiddle G to the same note. There were 21 stops, arranged as follows :—

GREAT.

Double-stopped Diapason.	Flute.
Open Diapason, 1.	Twelfth.
Open Diapason, 2.	Fifteenth..
Stopped Diapason.	Block-flute.
Principal, 1.	Sesquialtera of 3 ranks.
Principal, 2.	Trumpet.

CHOIR.

Dulciana.	Fifteenth.
Stopped Diapason.	Vox humana.
Principal.	

SWELL.

Open Diapason.	Trumpet.
Stopped Diapason.	Cremona.

This organ was replaced by a new one in 1854. The movement in favour of the now universal "equal temperament" for keyed instruments had already begun in Germany, but had not yet reached England, and in order

[1] This was not an unusual feature in the organs of those days. The picture by Thornhill in the Fitzwilliam Museum shows Handel playing on a keyboard of this kind ; a fine three-manual organ by Father Smith, belonging to the Mercers Company, had the same arrangement of the keys. It was replaced by a modern instrument in 1883. The organ that preceded the present one in Sevenoaks Church also had a similar arrangement of the keys.

to enlarge the range of keys available, Handel caused four out of the five "sharps" to be doubled, so that there were separate sounds for G♯ and A♭, A♯ and B♭, C♯ and D♭, D♯ and E♭. The only "sharp" left single being F♯, which had to serve for G♭. It is not impossible that had Handel been as scientific a musician as Bach, he would have adopted equal temperament, and thus saved the duplication of sounds.[1]

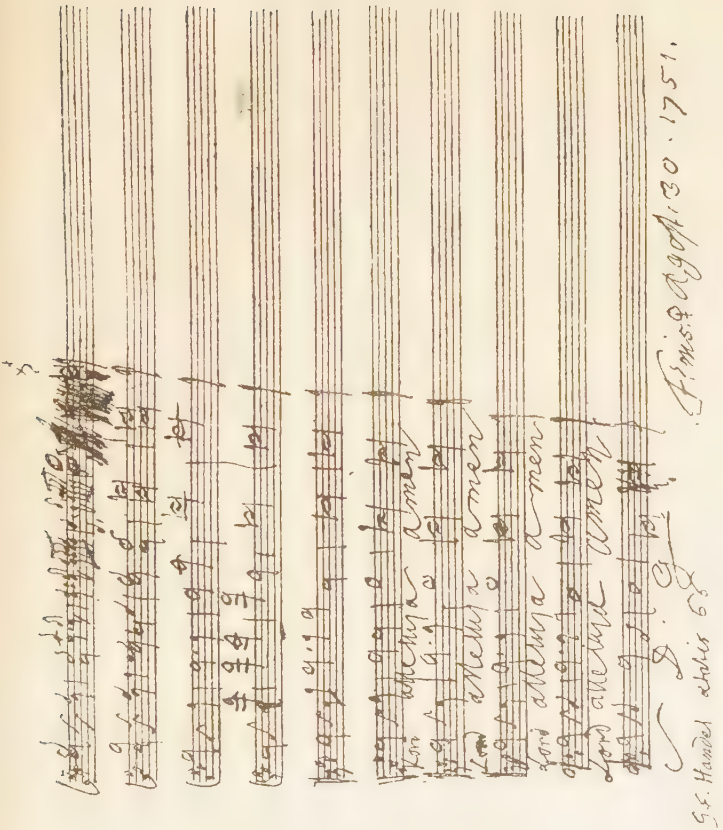
Choice of Hercules

From June 28th to July 5th Handel was engaged in composing the *Choice of Hercules*, and he appears then to have paid a short visit to Germany, for the *General Advertiser* of August 21st announces that "Mr Handel, who went to Germany to visit his friends some time since, and, between the Hague and Haarlem, had the misfortune to be overturned, by which he was terribly hurt, is now out of danger." There seems to be no further record of this visit to Germany, except a remark of Forkel, that on Handel's third visit to Halle, Bach (who had wished to meet him) was dead.

Jephtha

On January 21st, 1751, Handel began his last work, *Jephtha*, which was not finished, however, till August. It is signed "G. F. Handel ætatis 66, Finis Agost. 30, 1751." The work was interrupted

[1] For the uninitiated it may be explained that it is impossible with only twelve sounds in an octave to have all keys in tune. If a few keys are tuned perfectly, the remainder will be so harsh as to be unendurable. "Equal temperament" puts all keys equally *out* of tune, but so slightly as to be unappreciable, and the composer has all keys equally at command. Bach's forty-eight preludes and fugues in all major and minor keys were written to prove the possibilities of equal temperament.


Amen
Amen
Amen

in February by illness, which drove him to Cheltenham for the sake of the waters, after the completion of the second act. The third act was begun on June 18th, and continued till July 17th, when his illness again seized him, and he was forced to stop work till August 13th. By this time his sight had begun to fail, and was rapidly becoming worse. Yet he gave two performances of the *Messiah* in April and May 1751, "with an extempore on the organ." His sight was too far gone to allow of his playing any longer from notes.

He now placed himself in the hands of Samuel Sharp, the surgeon at Guy's Hospital, who found that he was suffering from incipient cataract. Hawkins says that "his spirits forsook him, and that fortitude which had supported him under afflictions of another kind deserted him in this, scarce leaving him patience to wait for that crisis in his disorder in which he might hope for relief. . . . Repeated attempts to relieve him were fruitless, and he was given to expect that a freedom from pain in the visual organs was all that he had to hope for the remainder of his days. As he could now no longer conduct his oratorios, he called upon Smith, the son of his amanuensis, to assist him, while he was forced to confine himself to extempore voluntaries on the organ."

He underwent three painful operations with no result.[1]

Operations on the eyes

The *Theatrical Register* informs us that on May 3rd, 1752, he was couched by William Bramfield, surgeon to the Princess of Wales. This was the last operation, and for a few days his sight was restored, but it again left him and never returned.

[1] The treatment consisted in forcing a needle through the eyeball. Anæsthetics were not in use in those days.

Pathetic Incident

He was at first quite overwhelmed by his misfortune, but gathering courage he sent for his pupil the younger Smith from France, and together with him began a new season on March 9th, 1753. At first Smith played the organ, but Handel soon recovered sufficient courage to play his concertos from memory, and afterwards extempore.

At the performance of *Samson* this season, many of the audience were moved to tears during the singing of

> "Total eclipse, no sun, no moon,
> All dark, amidst the blaze of noon."

at the sight of the old blind composer sitting near the organ. Burney says that to see him led to the organ at seventy years of age, and afterwards conducted towards the audience to make his accustomed obeisance, was a sight so truly affecting and deplorable to persons of sensibility, as greatly to diminish their pleasure in hearing his performance.

Schœlcher has shown that Handel must have been able to see a little at intervals during his blindness. A pencilled correction in his handwriting is found in a score of *Jephtha*, made by Smith in the year 1758, and he was able to write his signature to three codicils to his will. The pencilled note of music is written with a trembling hand, and is higher than the line on which he wished to place it, and in the duplicate signatures to the codicil of 1757 the letters are wide apart and very distinct.

But though Handel ceased to conduct after he became blind, an organist, John Stanley, who had lost his sight at two years old, was announced in 1753 to conduct the performance of *Alexander's Feast*, and to play a concerto on

the organ at the King's Theatre, for the benefit of the Smallpox Hospital. In those days the conductor sat at the harpsichord, accompanied the recitatives, filled in the harmonies, and apparently kept the band together by playing some chords if they got out. Spohr, who conducted the Philharmonic Society in 1820, insisted on conducting after the continental manner with a bâton, and he says that no one after this was seen seated at the piano during the performance of symphonies and overtures. It would be as impossible for a blind man to conduct, in the modern sense, as for a deaf man to do so, but it would be quite possible for a blind man, gifted with unusual memory, to control the band from the harpsichord.

Hostile attacks cease

Little is known of the next few years of Handel's life, beyond the fact that his enemies were now silenced, and that he and Smith continued to give performances of oratorios. In the evening of his life these became attractive enough to enable him not only to pay all his debts, but to amass another fortune of £20,000. He was neither lavish nor parsimonious. He at all times lived within his means, and in ordinary comfort. When his fortune increased he was enabled to give more in charity, and to give his services more frequently in the same cause. He had an enormous appetite, due probably to the immense strain to which he subjected his physical powers during the production of his works. His only recreation before he was blind was to visit picture galleries; every other hour of the day, and, judging from the prodigious rapidity with which he produced his works, most of the night also, were given up to the most strenuous labour. With his income he might easily have kept a

carriage, but he lived a perfectly simple life until his blindness forced him to employ a hackney coach.

He continued to work till the very end. In 1757, the *Triumph of Time and Truth*, altered from the Italian, and with several new additions, was performed. In 1758 it was repeated, with nine new pieces, dictated by the composer. The Italian words of Cardinal Pansili were translated into English by an unknown author, the recitative was to a great extent recomposed.

Approach of death

In the beginning of 1759 Mainwaring says: "He was very sensible of the approach of death, and refused to be flattered by any hopes of a recovery." He lost his great appetite; yet he worked on. In February he gave *Solomon*, "with new additions and alterations." In March, *Solomon*, *Susanna*, *Samson*, *Judas Maccabæus*, and the *Messiah*. The season was the most prosperous he had ever had. On April 6th the *Messiah* was performed at Covent Garden for the last time in the season, and he went home to his bed never to rise from it again. On April 11th he added a fourth codicil to his will. He was perfectly aware that death was upon him, and wished that he might expire on Good Friday, "in hopes of meeting his good God, his sweet Lord and Saviour, on the day of His resurrection."

Death

Burney says, on the authority of Dr Warren, who attended him in his last illness, that he died before midnight on Good Friday, April 13th, 1759; but the *Public Advertiser* of April 16th says: "Last Saturday, and not before, died at his house in Brook Street, Grosvenor Square, that eminent Master of Music, George Frederick Handel, Esq."

In confirmation of this, a letter is extant from James

Smyth, a perfumer of Bond Street, an intimate friend of Handel, to Bernard Granville of Calwich, Derbyshire, which runs as follows :—

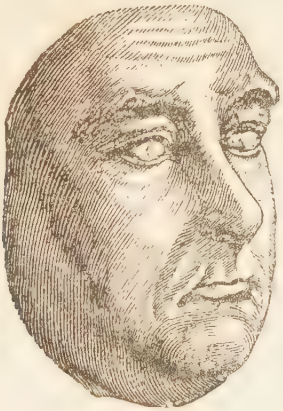
"*April 17th*, 1759.

"DEAR SIR —According to your request to me, when you left London, that I would let you know when our good friend departed this life—on Saturday last, at eight o'clock in the morning, died the great and good Mr Handel. He was sensible to the last moment; made a codicil to his will on Tuesday; ordered to be buried privately in Westminster Abbey, and a monument not to exceed £600 for him. I had the pleasure to reconcile him to his old friends; he saw them, and forgave them, and let all their legacies stand. In the codicil he left many legacies to his friends; and among the rest, he left me £600, and has left to you the two pictures you formerly gave him. He took leave of all his friends on Friday morning, and desired to see nobody but the doctor, and apothecary, and myself. At seven o'clock in the evening he took leave of me, and told me we should meet again. As soon as I was gone, he told his servant not to let me come to him any more, for now he had done with the world. He died as he lived, a good Christian, with a true sense of his duty to God and man, and in perfect charity with all the world." [1]

The funeral took place at Westminster Abbey, on April 20th, at about eight o'clock. Though it was private, no less than 3000 persons attended, and a sermon was preached by the dean, Dr Zachary Pearce, Bishop of Rochester.

[1] "Delany Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 549.

Roubiliac took a cast of the composer's face after death, and from it made the well-known monument, of which we give an engraving. It is said by Hawkins to be the best likeness of all the many portraits of him that were produced.



Death mask taken by Roubiliac for the monument in Westminster Abbey.

Handel's Will

Handel's will, written in his own handwriting, is preserved at Doctors' Commons. It is given in full by Schœlcher, Rockstro, and others, and a facsimile of the original will, dated June 1st, 1750, without the codicils, was published by Messrs Novello, in a special number of the *Musical Times* for December 14th, 1893.

He left his savings to his niece, Johanna Friderica

Floerchen, of Gotha, the daughter of Dr Michaelsen, who was also co-executor with George Amyand, merchant of London, subject, however, to the following legacies :—

£2000 to Christopher Smith, his old friend and secretary.

£1000 to the Royal Society of Musicians.

£500 each to his servant John Duburk, and his friend James Smyth, the perfumer.

£600 for his monument in Westminster Abbey.

£300 each to the five orphan children of his cousin George Taust, Pastor of Giebichenstein.

£300 each to his cousins Christiana Susanna Handelin, and Rachel Sophia; Thomas Harris of Lincoln's Inn Fields; the widow of his cousin Magister Christian Roth.

£200 each to Dr Morrell; George Amyand; Reiche, Secretary of Affairs of Hanover.

£100 each to John Hetherington, of the Middle Temple; Matthew Dubourg, the violinist; Newburgh Hamilton; Mrs Palmer, widow, of Chelsea; Thomas Bramwell, his servant.

Fifty guineas each to Benjamin Martyn of New Bond Street; John Cowland, apothecary; John Belcher, surgeon; Mrs Mayne, widow, of Kensington; Mrs Downalan, of Charles Street, Hanover Square.

It will be seen that of the £20,000, a sum of £7060 was divided between his personal friends, his widowed and orphan relations, the Royal Society of Musicians, and his servants; the bulk of the property going to his niece at Gotha.

To Christopher Smith he also left his large harpsichord, his little house organ, and his music books.

To John Rich, his great organ, standing in Covent Garden Theatre; to the Foundling Hospital, a full score, and all the parts of the *Messiah*; to Charles Jennens, two pictures by Denner; and to Bernard Granville of Calwich, in Derbyshire, two Rembrandts.

His furniture, of which an inventory is extant, was sold for £48 to his servant John Duburk. It is probable that at the time of his pecuniary troubles he had been obliged to sell a good deal, and had never troubled to replace it. He had been in his later years exceedingly anxious about his future fame, and had offered £3000 to Smith to renounce his claim on the promised manuscripts, in order that they might be deposited in the University of Oxford. Smith could not be persuaded to agree, and Handel held to his moral obligation, having sacrificed what he regarded as his means of continuing his memory, to his promise. He also requested that the Dean should allow of his being buried in Westminster Abbey, and left directions that the price of his monument should be paid out of his estate.

Charitable actions

During his life he gave no less than eleven performances of the *Messiah* at the Foundling Hospital, and a twelfth was advertised for May 3rd, 1759, with his name as conductor, but, owing to his death, Christopher Smith took his place. The Hospital benefited by the eleven performances to the extent of £6935; and after his death continued to perform the work till 1768, realising £1332. For the next eight years John Stanley undertook the direction, and realised £2032, so that the Hospital benefited by the *Messiah* altogether to the extent of £10,299.

Smith refused an offer of £2000 for the MSS. by the

King of Prussia, and would neither part with them nor allow them after his death to go out of the country. The mother of George III. gave him a pension of £200 a year, and George III. continued it after her death, in return for which Smith gave the King all the manuscripts, the harpsichord, and a bust by Roubiliac.

The Handel Manuscripts

These manuscripts are now at Buckingham Palace, the bust is at Windsor Castle. The fate of the harpsichord was for many years unknown: it was supposed to have gone to Winchester, and have been possessed by Dr Chard, organist of the cathedral there, and finally to Messrs Broadwood, who presented it to the South Kensington Museum. But recent research has discovered at Windsor Castle a fine Rucker's harpsichord, dated 1712, which Mr Hipkins identifies with every appearance of certainty as the one bequeathed by Handel to Smith.

Among the existing portraits of Handel are the following:—

Portraits

By Sir J. Thornhill, painted in 1720 (the Chandos portrait), representing the composer seated at the harpsichord. Now in the Fitzwilliam Museum.

By Grisoni. In the Fitzwilliam Museum (formerly the property of Boyce).

By Zincke, the most youthful existing portrait. In private possession.

By Kyte, engraved by Houbraken at Amsterdam. In private possession.

By a foreign artist, of which Hawkins gives a print, saying that it is the best of the portraits.

By Hudson. Belonging to the Royal Society of Musicians.

Portraits

By Hudson. At Buckingham Palace.

By Denner, given to John Christopher Smith. In private possession.

By Hudson, half-length. In the Bodleian Library.

By Hudson, full-length, 1756. Now at Gopsall.

By Hudson. In the National Portrait Gallery.

By Hudson or Kneller. In private possession at Berlin.

By Mercier. In private possession.

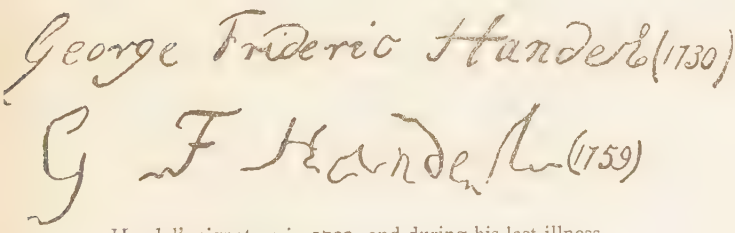
By G. A. Wolfgang. In private possession.

By Reynolds. In private possession.

A head. In the Music School at Oxford.

By Vander Myn. } In private possession.
By Dahl. }

Two miniatures at Windsor Castle, and the two statues by Roubiliac, mentioned on p. 145 and p. 177.



Handel's signature in 1730, and during his last illness.

Chapter XIII

Performances of Handel's music after his death—His character—Anecdotes.

After Handel's death, his fame, as is usually the case, increased enormously. His oratorios were constantly performed. The *Messiah*, as we have seen, added very considerably to the funds of the Foundling Hospital; and in 1784 his birth was commemorated on an enormous scale. Under the conductorship of Joah Bates, an enthusiastic amateur, a band of 525 vocal and instrumental musicians,[1] gave performances lasting five days in Westminster Abbey and the Pantheon. A Three Days' Festival had been advertised, but the demand for tickets was so enormous that it was found necessary to extend it to five days.

Commemoration of Handel

The programmes were taken entirely from the works of the master; Burney wrote an important "Sketch in Commemoration of Handel"; and, after paying the expenses of the Festival, £6000 was given to the Royal Society of Musicians and £1000 to Westminster Hospital. The

[1] The band consisted of—violins 95; violas 26; violoncellos 21; double basses 15; flutes 6; oboes 26; bassoons 26; double bassoon 1; trumpets 12; horns 12; trombones 6; drums 4; sopranos 59; altos 48; tenors 83; basses 84 (including 17 soloists); with an organ specially built for the occasion.

Statue at Halle

Festival was repeated at intervals during subsequent years until 1791, when the number of performers reached 1068.

In 1825 a similar festival took place at York. The centenary of his death was celebrated in 1859 at the Crystal Palace under Sir Michael Costa, with a choir of 2700 and an orchestra of 460, a large organ being built for the purpose. The success of this experiment was so great that it has since been repeated every three years under the name of the "Handel Festival."

Handel Festival

Handel's music was much admired in Germany. In 1745 he was made the first honorary member of Mizler's Society for Musical Science which had been recently founded at Leipsic. Bach did not join the society till two years later. Most of Handel's operas were performed in Germany soon after they appeared in London, and after his death many of the oratorios were given in that country, though not so frequently as in England; after a time, however, they seem to have been more or less neglected. Of late years, chiefly owing to the efforts of Dr Chrysander, who is doing for Handel what Mendelssohn and Sterndale Bennett did for Bach, the oratorios have been steadily winning their way back to public favour. The *Zeitshrift der internationalen Musikgesellschaft* for Oct. 1900, gives an interesting catalogue of performances of Handel's oratorios in various German towns from 1889 to 1900. The *Messiah* has been given nineteen times; *Deborah* fifteen; *Hercules*, *Acis*, *Esther*, *Israel in Egypt*, *Judas Maccabæus*, four times each; "Utrecht" *Jubilate* three; *Samson* and *Saul* twice each; and the *Cecilia Ode* once;

Handel's works in Germany

altogether sixty-two performances in eleven years, so that Germany must be now becoming fairly familiar with our composer.

Personal character

Of Handel's personal character, the reader will probably have observed that he was obstinate and determined in the face of opposition; honourable and upright in all money transactions. That he was overflowing with compassion towards the unfortunate is shown by the numerous performances he gave in the cause of charity, even when he himself was in difficulties. He was careful for widows and orphans. He was one of the founders of the Royal Society of Musicians. For its benefit he performed *Acis and Galatea* in 1740; he gave it his *Parnasso in Festa*, and bequeathed it £1000. His abounding charity and uprightness of conduct show that his Lutheran religion was a reality with him, and that it affected his whole life. We have seen what his religious feeling was on his deathbed.

Like all gentlemen of the first half of the eighteenth century, he was in the habit of swearing a great deal. Modern writers have professed to be much shocked at this "profane" habit, quite forgetting that what we call "bad language" was as general a habit in conversation as the "slang" which has taken its place at the present day. It is not at all impossible that writers of the end of the twentieth century may be as much shocked at the "slang" and "bad English" of the nineteenth, as modern writers are at Handel's perfectly harmless "bad language." His temper was, like that of most musicians, very irritable, and was not improved by the unworthy treatment he received

from his enemies. But, except in one instance, he is not known to have borne ill-will against those with whom he had differences. The one instance is that of John Christopher Smith, his old college friend, who joined him at Anspach, and who for many years acted as his treasurer and concert agent. Smith's son, John Christopher, was sent to school in Soho Square, but at the age of thirteen, Handel, finding that he showed considerable musical talent, took him to his house, made him his pupil, and afterwards employed him as his copyist, and became a faithful friend to him. Meanwhile, Smith senior continued to be Handel's treasurer till four years before the latter's death, when they went to Tunbridge together, and there quarrelled over some trivial matter.

Handel then took young Smith by the hand, and said he was going to put his name in the place of that of his father in his will. Whereupon young Smith said that in that case he would never play for Handel again, for it would look as if he had undermined his father in Handel's favour. Handel relented, and increased the elder Smith's legacy from £500 to £2000; but the quarrel does not seem to have been made up in spite of this, for three weeks before Handel's death, he asked young Smith to receive the sacrament with him. Smith asked how he could communicate when he was at enmity with his former friend, whereupon Handel was immediately reconciled.[1]

[1] "Anecdotes of Handel and Smith," by Rev. J. C. Coxe, 1797. The account says that Handel was immediately reconciled and left Smith senior £2400, having before given him £1000 and all his MS. music, etc. The original legacy of £500 was in reality increased

It would seem, therefore, that Handel's sense of moral obligation was such that though he could not forgive, he would not deprive of his just reward the man who had served him so well.

His personal appearance is described by Hawkins and Burney.

Personal appearance

Hawkins, vol. v. p. 412, says: "He was in his person a large made, and very portly man. His gait, which was ever sauntering, was rather ungraceful, as it had in it somewhat of that rocking motion which distinguishes those whose legs are bowed. His features were finely marked, and the general cast of his countenance placid, bespeaking dignity attempered with benevolence, and every quality of the heart that has a tendency to beget confidence and insure esteem. Few of the pictures extant of him are to any tolerable degree likenesses, except one painted abroad from a print whereof the engraving given of him in this volume is taken. In the print of him by Houbraken, the features are too prominent; and in the mezzo-tint after Hudson there is a harshness of aspect to which his countenance was a stranger; the most perfect resemblance of him is the statue on his monument, and in that the true lineaments of his face are apparent."

Burney, who frequently played the viola in his orchestra, describes his general look as somewhat heavy and sour; but when he smiled it was like the sun flashing out of

by £1500 by codicil in 1756; three years, not three weeks, before the death. Schoelcher, p. 352, overlooking the above account, says that the MSS., etc., were bequeathed to his *pupil*, Christopher Smith. It is evident that they were bequeathed to the elder Smith, and inherited from him by the younger.

Portrait by T. Hudson in the National Portrait Gallery

a black cloud. He dressed handsomely in gold-laced coat, ruffles,[1] cocked hat, and sword.

Anecdotes of Handel have been told over and over again, and are well known to his admirers, but we are obliged to repeat some of them here in order to make the account complete, and they throw interesting side lights on his character. *Anecdotes*

He liked occasionally to take a boat, and go for a row on the Thames. There is an amusing account in the *Somerset House Gazette*, vol. i., 1823, by Ephraim Hardcastle, of a breakfast party, probably in 1751, to which Handel came uninvited with a "notable appetite" after having been on the water. Ephraim Hardcastle had an uncle named Zachary, a merchant, who, after he retired from business, lived in Paper Buildings in the Temple, and there received on intimate terms the most distinguished painters, poets, and musicians of his time. This Zachary Hardcastle had invited Pepusch, Arne, and Colley Cibber to breakfast at nine o'clock, and to accompany him to hear a competition for the post of organist at the Temple Church. While the company were awaiting Arne, a knock was heard at the door, and Handel entered.

"What! my dear friend Hardcastle! you are merry by times! What, and Mr Colley Cibbers and Doctor Pepusch! Well, that is comical. Pray let me sit down a moment.

. . . . . .

"Upon my word, that is a picture of a ham. It is very bold of me to come and break my fast with you uninvited; and I have brought along with me a notable

[1] Dr W. H. Cummings possesses one of these.

appetite; for the water of old Father Thames, is it not a fine bracer of the appetite?"

"Pray, did you come with oars or scullers, Mr Handel?" said Pepusch.

"How can you demand of me that silly question, Dr Pepusch? What can it concern you whether I have one waterman or two watermans—whether I pull out my purse for to pay one shilling or two? Diavolo! I cannot go here, I cannot go there, but someone shall send it to some newspaper, as how Mr George Frederick Handel did go sometimes last week to break his fast with Mr Zac. Hardcastle; but it shall be all my fault if it shall be put in print, whether I was rowed by one waterman or by two watermans."[1]

. . . . . .

"Well, gentlemen," said Zachary, "it is ten minutes past nine. Shall we wait more for Dr Arne?"

"Let us give him another five minutes," said Colley Cibber; "he is too great a genius to keep time."

"Let us put it to the vote," said Dr Pepusch.

"I will second your motion with all my heart," said Handel. "I will hold up my feeble hands for my old friend Gustus (Augustus), for I know not who I would wait for over and above my old rival, Master Tom (Thomas Pepusch). Only, with your permission, I will take a snack of your ham and a slice of French roll, or a modicum of chicken, for to tell you the honest fact, I am all but famished; for I laid me down last night without my supper, at the instance of my physician; for which I am not inclined to extend my fast any longer."

[1] Handel hated trivial questions, saying, "If a man cannot think but as a fool, let him keep his fool's tongue in his own fool's mouth."

. . . . . .

"If you please, do me the kindness to cut me a small slice of ham."

. . . . . .

Dr Arne was now announced, and the party began breakfast.

"Well, and how do you feel yourself, my dear sir?" said Arne.

"Why, by the mercy of Heaven and the waters of Aix-la-Chapelle, and the attentions of my doctors and physicians and oculists, of late years, under Providence, I am surprisingly better, thank you kindly, Mr Gustus. And you have also been doing well of late, I am pleased to hear."

. . . . . .

"So, sir, I presume you are come to witness the trial of skill at the old Round Church? I understand the amateurs expect a pretty sharp contest," said Arne.

"Contest!" echoed Handel, laying down his knife and fork; "yes, no doubt; your amateurs have a passion for contest. Not what it was in our remembrance. Hey, my friend? Ha, ha, ha!"

"No, sir, I am happy to say those days of envy and bickering and party feeling are gone and past. To be sure we had enough of such disgraceful warfare; it lasted too long."

"Why, yes, it did last too long; it bereft me of my poor limbs; it did bereave me of what is the most precious gift of Him that made us and not we ourselves" (his reason). "And for what? Why, for nothing in the world but the pleasure and pastime of them who having no wit, nor no want, set at loggerheads such men as live

by their wits, to worry and destroy one another as wild beasts in the Coliseum in the time of the Romans."

. . . . . .

"Gustus, do not you remember as it was almost only of yesterday, that she-devil, Cuzzoni, and that other precious daughter of iniquity, Beelzebub's spoiled child, the pretty-faced Faustina? O! the mad rage that I have to answer for, what with one and the other of these fine ladies' airs and graces. Again, do you not remember that upstart puppy, Senesino, and the coxcomb, Farinelli? Next, again, my some-time notable rival, Master Bononcini, and old Porpora? ha, ha, ha! all at war with me, and all at war with themselves. Such a confusion of rivalships, and double-facedness, and hypocrisy, and malice, that would make a comical subject for a poem in rhymes, or a piece for the stage, as I hope to be saved."

The narrative ends here. It gives an interesting picture of Handel's private intercourse with his friends.

Dr Morell having complained that the music of one of his airs did not suit the words, Handel lost his temper and cried out, "What, sir, you teach me music? The music, sir, is good music. It is your words is bad. Hear the passage again. There: go you, make words to that music." A singer found fault with his method of accompanying, saying that if he accompanied him in that way he would jump from the stage on to the harpsichord and smash it. "Oh," said Handel, "you will jump, will you? Then let me know when you will jump and I will advertise it in the bills, and I shall get more people to see you jump than to hear you sing." When in Dublin, Dubourg, the famous violinist, having to play an extem-

pore cadenza, had wandered far away from the key, and getting bewildered was at some difficulty in returning. At length, when he arrived at the orthodox shake, which always terminated a cadenza, Handel said in a voice which was heard all over the theatre, "You are well come at home, Mr Dubourg."

Handel was twice nearly married; on the first occasion the mother of the lady objected to her daughter marrying a "mere fiddler." On the death of the mother, the father came forward and said that there was now no objection to the marriage, but Handel, whose professional pride had been outraged, said it was now too late. It is said that the lady went into a decline and died. On another occasion he had wished to marry a lady of means and position, who, however, made it a stipulation that he should give up his profession. This condition he naturally refused, and remained single.

Handel, like all musicians of the first rank, looked upon his art as something higher than a mere amusement and recreation. After the first performance in London of the *Messiah*, Lord Kinnoul complimented him on the "noble entertainment" he had given the audience. "I should be sorry, my lord," said Handel, "if I have only succeeded in entertaining them; I wished to make them better." There is no doubt that the composition of the *Messiah* affected him deeply. He was found sobbing while writing the music of "He was despised and rejected of men," and his servant, when bringing him his chocolate, was often astonished "to see his master's tears mixing with the ink as he penned his divine compositions."

The effect on the London audience of the unison passage in the "Hallelujah" chorus, "For the Lord God

Omnipotent reigneth," was electrical : the whole audience, with the King, rose to its feet, and remained standing to the end of the number.

After he had lost his sight, his surgeon, Mr Sharp, recommended Stanley, the blind organist, as a person who, from his wonderful powers of memory, would be able to take his place at the organ in oratorios. Handel burst into a loud laugh, and said : "Mr Sharp, have you never read the Scriptures? Do you not remember that if the blind lead the blind, they will both fall into the ditch?"

Burney says he was impetuous, rough, and peremptory in his manners and conversation, but totally devoid of ill-nature or malevolence ; there was an original humour and pleasantry in his most lively sallies of anger and impatience, which, with his broken English, were extremely risible.

He was reserved towards everybody, but extremely polite. In his most hastily written scores, he never failed to put "Mr," "Signor," "Signora," before the names of the singers to whom the various parts were allotted. He was well read, and had a competent knowledge of Latin, English, French, and Italian, besides his own language. He used all five languages in the dates, etc., of his compositions ; thus the oratorio *Jephtha* is "angefangen, 21 Jan'. 1751" : Iephtha enters "solus" : the English word "Symphony" is applied to the instrumental piece in the second act. The beginning of Act 3 is dated in French, "Juin 18"; and its completion in Italian, "Agost 30, 1751." For the last twenty years of his life he always used astronomical signs to indicate the days of the week. When excited his language was most amusingly polyglot.

A clergyman named Felton, an amateur composer, had published a set of organ concertos, and finding them well received, he endeavoured to get Handel's name on the subscription list of a second set. The request was conveyed to him one morning while he was being shaved. Handel got up in a fury, and, with his face covered with lather, said, "Damn yourself and go to the devil! a parson make concertos? why he no make sermons?"

As his old friends died off, he made few new ones, and retired more and more from society. He then acquired a habit of talking loudly to himself so that he could be overheard. In Hyde Park he was heard commenting on a pupil who had run away from him: "The devil; the father was deceived, the mother was deceived, but I was not deceived; he is a damned scoundrel, and good for nothing."

Of Gluck he said, "He knows no more of counterpoint than my cook." This cook was Gustavus Waltz, who afterwards became a good bass singer and a violoncellist. He sang the part of Polyphemus in *Acis*, and with Reinhold the duet in *Israel*, "The Lord is a man of war." An engraving of a portrait of him by Hauck, in the possession of Mr Taphouse of Oxford, is given in the *Musical Times* of December 14, 1893.

Handel had as clear a conception as Beethoven of the distinction that comes from greatness of mind, as opposed to that which comes from mere birth, or social position, or wealth. "Such as are not acquainted with his personal character," says Hawkins, "will wonder at his seeming temerity in continuing so long an opposition which tended but to impoverish him; but he was a man of a firm and

intrepid spirit, no way a slave to the passion of avarice, and would have gone greater lengths than he did rather than submit to those [1] whom he ever looked upon as his inferiors."

"Kings and princes," said Beethoven, "can, to be sure, make professors, privy councillors, etc., and confer titles and orders, but they cannot make great men, minds which rise above the common herd: these they must not pretend to make, and therefore these must be held in honour!" [2]

At a private rehearsal of a duet in *Judas Maccabæus*, Burney, who was accompanying, came in for a tremendous explosion of wrath, but summoned up courage to suggest that the MS. might perhaps be wrong. Handel instantly, with the greatest humility, said, "I beg your pardon, I am a very odd dog, Master Smith [3] is to blame."

Carestini sent back the air "Verdi prati" in *Alcina*, saying it did not suit his voice. Handel, who knew better than anyone else how to suit a particular voice, lost his temper, rushed to Carestini's house and said, "You dog! don't I know better than yourself what is best for you to sing? If you will not sing all the song what I give you, I will not pay you one stiver."

If the Prince of Wales was late in coming to a concert, or if the ladies of the Court talked during it, his rage used to become uncontrollable, and he would swear and call names in the presence of royalty; whereupon the Princess

[1] *i.e.* the nobility.

[2] Lewes, "Life of Goethe," vol. ii. p. 370.

[3] Smith, it will be remembered, made all the fair copies of Handel's works.

would say to the talkative ones, "Hush, hush, Handel is in a passion."[1]

During an oratorio he was very excitable; he would utter the word "Chorus" in a most formidable voice, as a warning for them to rise. He wore an enormous white wig, which nodded or vibrated when things went well; when it did not nod, observers knew that he was out of humour.

He was extremely sensitive to sound, and could not tolerate the tuning of the orchestra, which was therefore done before he arrived at the theatre. A foolish practical joker one evening got into the orchestra and untuned all the instruments. The Prince of Wales arrived, and Handel gave the signal to begin *con spirito*, when such a discord arose, that the enraged musician started from his seat, overturned a double bass, seized a kettledrum, threw it at the leader of the orchestra, and lost his wig. He advanced bareheaded to the front of the orchestra, but was so choked with passion that he could not speak. Here he stood staring and stamping amidst general convulsions of laughter, until the Prince personally, with

[1] The detestable habit of looking upon instrumental music as a mere cover for conversation, which even now has not died out in certain social circles in England, seems formerly to have obtained in various parts of Europe. In Italy, for instance, poor Corelli was once so disturbed by it that he laid down his violin, saying he "feared to interrupt the conversation"; and Beethoven, while playing a duet with Ries at the house of Count Browne, at Vienna, being disturbed by the conversation of a young nobleman with a lady, suddenly lifted Ries' hand from the instrument, saying in a loud voice, "I play no longer for such hogs." This has been brought against him as a breach of good manners, but surely the insult to the musicians was at least an equal breach of good manners.

much difficulty, appeased his wrath and prevailed on him to resume his seat.

A tradition states that one day dining at a tavern, he ordered dinner for three, and, getting impatient, asked why it was not brought up. The landlord said he was waiting for the company. "I am the company," said Handel, "bring up the dinner prestissimo."

He had a great liking for Father Smith's organ at St Paul's, and at one time used often to play the concluding voluntary at afternoon service. He then would retire with the painter Goupy, Hunter, a scarlet dyer, and his secretary, J. C. Smith, to the Queen's Arms tavern, where he would play the harpsichord while he smoked and drank beer.

Apropos of his organ playing, an amusing story is told of his endeavouring to "play the people out" at a country church. The people were so lost in admiration that they would not go; whereupon the country organist getting impatient, said, "You cannot play them out, let me show you how"; and on his taking Handel's place at the organ, the congregation rapidly disappeared.

The *Messiah* was not published during his lifetime, but he gave MS. copies to the Dublin Charitable Musical Society, the Royal Society of Musicians, and the Foundling Hospital. The Governors of the last named institution, misunderstanding the purport of the gift, thought that they were to have the exclusive right of performing it for ever. They drew up a bill to be presented to Parliament confirming their legal rights in this matter, and showed it to Handel, who became furious. "The devil!" said he, "for what shall the Foundlings put mine oratorio in the Parliament? The devil! Mine music shall not go to the Parliament."

He took immense pains in preparing his concertos for performance; every key of his harpsichord was by constant practice hollowed out like the bowl of a spoon. This is supposed to be the instrument now at Windsor Castle, but its keyboards have been renewed.

When the rupture took place between Bononcini and the Academy of Ancient Music, Dr Greene, who stuck to Bononcini, left it, and took with him the boys of St Paul's Cathedral. He then established concerts at the Devil Tavern, near Temple Bar; whereupon Handel said, "Poor Dr Greene has gone to the devil."

The fugue subject in the overture to *Muzio Scævola* is in G minor, the answer being, therefore, properly in D minor, and involving a somewhat harsh progression from G to F natural. Handel boldly wrote F♯ in the answer, and was at once condemned by the critics as having broken the rules of fugue. Geminiani, hearing this accusation, exclaimed: "True, but that semitone is worth a world."

Amongst the small-minded attacks of his enemies was a paragraph in some of the daily papers in 1753 announcing that Mr Handel was preparing his own Funeral Anthem, to be performed in the chapel of the Foundling Hospital. The Governors, being very indignant at this, wrote to him, hoping that one who had done so much for the charity might be spared for a long life.

He undertook the entire education of the son of his friend and treasurer, John Christopher Smith, sending him to Mr Clare's Academy in Soho Square, and, after himself teaching him the rudiments of music, engaging Pepusch and Roseingrave, organist of St George's, Hanover Square, to continue his musical education

when he himself had no longer leisure to give him instruction.

Handel not only made use of the works of other composers, but availed himself of any source that might be useful. For instance, some of his songs were suggested by the notes of street criers; a piece of music paper among the Fitzwilliam MSS. contains a tune used by one John Shaw, to the words, "Buoy any matches; my matches buoy," evidently taken down with a view to future use.

Of English organists he said: "When I first came I found among the English many good players, but no composers; now they are all composers and no players."

When George III. was a child, Handel, noticing that he listened very attentively to his harpsichord playing, asked him if he liked the music. The little Prince was very enthusiastic in his love for it, whereupon Handel said: "A good boy, a good boy; you shall protect my fame when I am dead."

One of the stories told by his enemies is to the effect that Handel having invited some of the principal performers in the oratorio to dine with him at Brook Street, often cried out: "Oh! I have the thought," and left the table. One of the company at last peeped through the keyhole, and found that the composer was not writing down his "thoughts," but enjoying a bottle of Burgundy, of which he had received a hamper as a present from Lord Radnor, while his guests were given port. Schœlcher does not believe this story; but it is at any rate on a par with the story of Goupy the painter being treated in a similar way. Handel was just as human as any other man, and it is well known that one of his failings was an

insatiable delight in the pleasures of the table. That he did not share his Burgundy with his guests was certainly a gross breach of good manners ; but faults in manners are not confined to great geniuses. They have been known even in those who, having no brains, and no absorbing work, are in a better position to give proper attention to the ordinary civilities of life.

He, like Beethoven after him, had little respect for potentates as such. When the King of Prussia, Frederick the Great, was about to visit Aix-la-Chapelle, and had expressed a wish to hear Handel, he quitted the place rather than expose himself to solicitations he had determined not to comply with, or to commands which he could not resist. He had a true artist's horror of exhibiting his powers as a mere curiosity.

Chapter XIV

Operas

THERE is no doubt that Handel's Italian operas were superior to anything that had been composed by Italians at the time they came into existence. Handel spent several years in Italy as a student; knew more about the voice than most singing masters; had a strong sense of dramatic fitness; and, in addition, a colossal genius for original composition. But it was not only his power of composition that helped him; he had also a most remarkable talent for adapting himself to circumstances, and for producing real works of art under most unfavourable conditions.

In order to understand what the conditions were, it is necessary to inquire into the state of Italian opera at that time. The first attempts at producing true dramatic music, as opposed to the old madrigal and other more or less contrapuntal forms, had been made about the year 1600, and had resulted in the aria for solo voice, and the recitative, or narrative form of music. The movement rapidly spread over Italy, where numerous opera-houses sprang up in every town. It was taken up by the Courts of Germany and France, and in course of time reached England.

The opera was cultivated in Italy by the people, but

in other countries it became merely an expensive amusement for Royalty, and an aristocracy who, being idle, were ever seeking some new excitement.

From singers, good voice, delivery and expression, though indispensable, were not the only essentials demanded. It was absolutely necessary that they should have enormous powers of execution; that they should not only be able to sing the so-called "divisions" written for them by composers, but that they should also be able to invent others for themselves; add the "ornaments" which were then universal in slow movements; and be able to shake clearly and rapidly on any note. The form of the opera soon became highly conventionalised, with a view to giving each character an opportunity for display. There were almost invariably three acts, each divided into scenes; every scene had to end with an aria; the audience, who only came to hear its favourite singers, would not tolerate choruses, and the only place for a so-called chorus was at the end of the last act, when all the characters had to appear at once, and sing some simple quartet or trio (doubling the parts if necessary), usually in the form of a gavotte, or other dance time, though in some cases it took the form of a madrigal. Duets, trios and quartets were only introduced when absolutely necessary to carry on the action; and the singing in two, three or four-part harmony, even in a duet, trio, or quartet, was avoided as much as possible. Everything was done to exalt the solo voice, the only thing the audience cared to hear.

The opera was obliged under all circumstances to end happily, never mind how many tragic situations might have occurred. This is referred to in the *Beggars' Opera*,

where the Player and Beggar enter at the moment that the chief character is about to be executed, and arrange that the opera must end happily: "in drama it is no matter how things are brought about; do you, rabble there, run and cry a reprieve; let the prisoner be brought back to his wives; all this to comply with the taste of the town."

The "scenes" consisted of recitative followed by an aria, and the arias were of several classes: *aria cantabile*, a slow movement, into which the singer was expected to throw pathos, and to introduce extempore ornamentation; *aria di portamento*, of a more strongly marked rhythm than the former; *aria parlante*, expressing violent emotion; *aria di bravura*, or *d'agilità*, intended to exhibit the powers of the singer in the display of difficult "divisions"; *aria d'imitazione*, in which a flute or a horn imitated birds or the sounds of the chase, etc.; besides many sub-divisions of these classes.

The performers were the *prima donna* (first woman), a soprano; *seconda donna* (second woman), soprano or contralto; *terza donna* (third woman), contralto; *primo uomo* (first man), who was obliged to be an artificial soprano; *secondo uomo* (second man), an artificial soprano or contralto; *terza uomo* (third man), tenor; *ultima parte*, when employed, was a bass.

The opera began with an overture, the form of which had been established by Lully, and was adopted by Handel for all his operas and oratorios. It had nothing in common with the modern overture, in which a foretaste of the music of the opera itself is given. It consisted of a maestoso movement, followed by an allegro, generally in the form of a light fugue, and frequently a third movement

in the form of a minuet, gavotte or gigue, or even a succession of dances, followed the fugue.

Nearly all the *arias* took the form invented by Alessandro Scarlatti, namely, a long section in the principal key, followed by a shorter section in a related key, and then a repetition of the whole of the first section. Each performer had to sing one or more songs in each of the three acts; no performer might sing two *arias* in succession; nor might two *arias* of the same class be sung one after the other. Recitative was either *secco* (dry), that is, with only the basses and harpsichord for accompaniment, or *stromentato*, *i.e.* accompanied by the strings. The *prima donna* and *primo uomo* had each a "scena" to themselves in the course of the opera.[1]

Singers, petted and spoilt by an idle aristocracy, and being as a rule persons of little culture, had become overbearing and conceited beyond description in their behaviour towards composers, who were expected to humour their every whim. The voice was with them everything; the music was simply a vehicle for its display; dramatic requirements were practically put aside in order to allow them every opportunity for gaining applause. Jealousies were frequent. One of Handel's cleverest devices was the writing of the duet in which the two *prime donne*, Cuzzoni and Faustina, were given each an absolutely equal part, so that neither could say that she had sung second to the other.

Handel was not a reformer like Gluck and Wagner. He took the opera as he found it, and simply embellished it by means of his great genius. He

[1] For further particulars, see Rockstro's article on "Opera" in Grove's "Dictionary of Music."

was content to work on the forms that he found established, trusting for success to the employment of the best singers and instrumentalists that could be obtained. He paid his singers handsomely; and when he could no longer afford this, in the time of his bankruptcy, he somehow managed that at any-rate his instrumentalists should still be the best obtainable, and that they should be well paid for their services. We have the names of some of them: Matthew Dubourg, who was his first violinist, and who had led the band at Dublin for him, was a pupil of Geminiani, and a famous player; Valentine Snow, his first trumpeter, for whom his many difficult trumpet obbligatos were written; Caporale, his first violoncello, is mentioned by Fétis for his beauty of tone; Weidemann, his flautist; Clegg, probably a pupil of Dubourg, and in his time a well-known violinist: Powell, a harpist; the brothers Castrucci, violinists, pupils of Corelli, and who also played the *violetta marina* in *Orlando*.[1] Lampe, his fagottist, for whom Handel is said to have caused a double bassoon to be made by Stanesby, was also a composer, and was employed by Rich to write two operas for the Covent Garden Theatre, *Amalia*, 1732, and *Roger et Jean*; but he was best known by two burlesques, *The Dragon of Wantley*, and *Margery*. He was also the author of a treatise on Thoroughbass.

The orchestration of Handel's operas would probably seem exceedingly monotonous to an audience accustomed to the brilliancy of modern instrumentation. Bach wrote counterpoint for each individual instrument and voice, and his cantatas are, as a rule, in as many contrapuntal

[1] Fétis says that one of the Castrucci brothers served as a model for Hogarth's caricature, "The Enraged Musician."

parts as there are instruments or voices employed. Handel's use of the orchestra was different. Laying a foundation of strings and harpsichord, to which he added oboes, often in unison with the violins, and bassoons with the string basses, he only introduces other instruments for special effects. Thus in a march, trumpets and drums are invariably used; horns were also occasionally added. In a pathetic song, *flauti*, *i.e.* the *flute-à-bec*, would be employed. In other places the *flauta traverso* (the modern flute); the *viola da gamba*, *theorbo*, *harp*, *organ* (it will be remembered that he owned a large organ which stood in Covent Garden Theatre), *violetta marina* (a kind of viol d'amour, with sympathetic strings); *viola di braccio* (the ordinary viola); *violetta haute contre*, and *taille* (names for first and second viola); *cornet* (a wooden instrument covered with leather, with a trumpet mouthpiece); *flageolet* (a small flute-à-bec); *recorder* (bass flute).

Often he would make all the violins play in unison, with nothing but the chords on the harpsichord between them and the bass; at other times he would use violas and basses only, as in "Habbiate pazienza" in *Almira*. Again he would divide his violins into two, three, four, or even five parts, and his violas also into several.

In the same opera, in order to give due effect to a song in which Fernando laughs at Osman for having his sword snatched away, the accompaniment consists of two oboes and a bassoon only. A great deal of expense was lavished on the machinery[1] of the theatre, and instrumental bands

[1] In *Rinaldo* a black cloud appears covered with horrible monsters spouting fire and smoke, with a great noise: and we have already referred to the live birds in this opera.

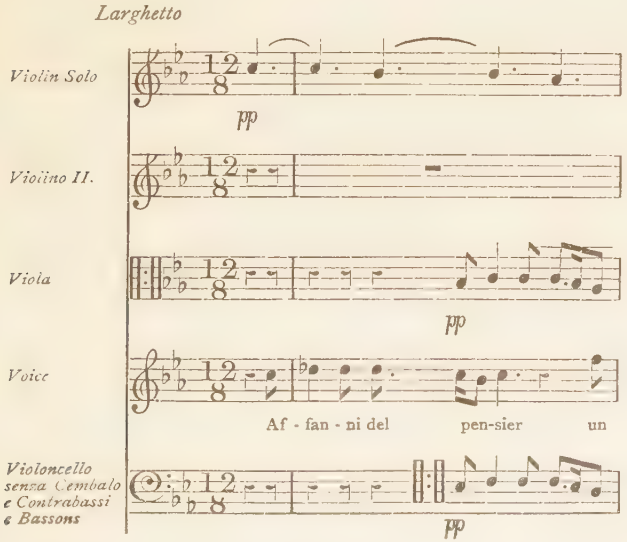
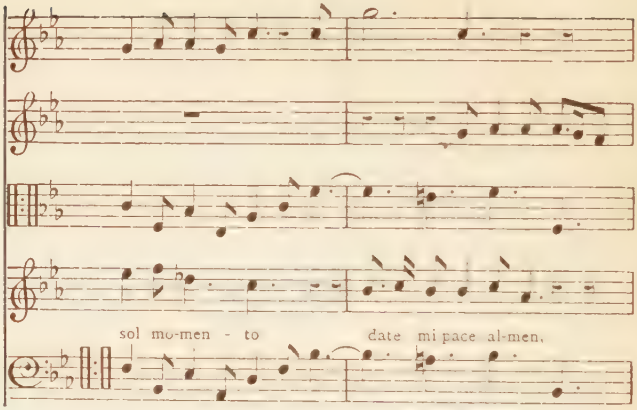
frequently appeared on the stage. In the third act of *Almira*, a band of hautbois, a band of trumpets and drums, a band of cymbals, drums and "crossflutes," a hurdy-gurdy and bagpipe, march in succession across the stage. Frequently an aria is accompanied by violins, or even the whole orchestra, in unison with the voice, and no bass. Solos for oboe, bassoon, violin, violoncello, often occur in the songs, and demand considerable skill. There must have been a good solo violoncellist at Florence in 1707, for there is a difficult violoncello part in *Rodrigo*. The style, as we have seen, is like that of Corelli.

Handel was fond of imitative effects: the jumping of frogs, the "Hailstone" Chorus, and the plague of flies in *Israel in Egypt*, are well known examples. In *Rodrigo* he represents the words "La mia constanza" (my constancy) by a note sustained through nearly six bars by the voice, with an elaborate violin accompaniment. Handel, like Bach, felt the limitations of unequally tempered keyed instruments; he had no hesitation in modulating as far afield as he wished, but took care to silence the harpsichord or organ, leaving the strings alone to play in unusual keys.

In *Agrippina* he first divides his violins into three parts.—Violino I., Violino II., Violino III.—and uses muted violins with pizzicato basses and two flutes, which effect was also used by Bach in his cantata, *Freue dich, erloste Schaar*. In the same opera he extemporised on the harpsichord in the ritornels of one of the songs; he afterwards wrote down the music of these extempore pieces, and they are to be found in the Fitzwilliam Museum.

The well known march in *Rinaldo* is scored for no less than four trumpets, in addition to the strings, oboes and

drums. Handel was very fond of the trumpet, and never lost an opportunity of introducing it. In *Il Pastor Fido* the *violono grosso*, an exceptionally large double bass, appears for the first time, and has solo passages, besides a duet with the bassoon. In *Radamisto* horns occur for the first time, and are frequently used in all subsequent works.

The aria *Affanni del pensier* in *Ottone*, so frequently alluded to as one of the most beautiful songs, owes its effect as much to its delicate orchestration as to its melody. We quote a few bars:—

In *Giulio Cesare* four horns in two keys are used, thus anticipating modern custom. The harp, viola-da-gamba and theorbo have very florid obbligato parts in music prepared by Cleopatra to soften the heart of Cæsar.

In the second version of *Rinaldo* two harpsichords were used, and in *Orlando* two of the second violin players were ordered to strengthen the first violins in certain passages. In *Terpsichore* the theorbo played with "Les orgues doucement"; apparently there was more than one organ in the theatre. In *Giustino* a bass flute is employed. The popular "Largo" is a song in *Serse*, "Ombra mai fu." In *Deidamia* a march is played on board a ship, in which Nestor and Ulysses are about to embark, by a band of horns, trumpets and drums.

The foregoing account of Handel's orchestration may appear dry and technical to the amateur reader, but we

have given it in order to show that Handel was as skilful in his use of the orchestra as in his counterpoint. The operas were mounted with the greatest possible brilliancy; the orchestra was large and varied; and the composer was just as careful in the choice of suitable instrumentation as any modern composer could be.

His operas have disappeared from the stage for nearly a century and a half, and admirers have suggested that a revival of some of them might be attempted. But such an attempt would almost certainly fail to attract the public, however interesting it might be to the few. Handel, in his operas, was essentially a man of his own times. He made no effort to advance the art; he simply took the forms he found ready-made, and adorned them with all the beauty and solidity that he was capable of producing; and as he was head and shoulders above his contemporaries in the power of producing beautiful music, his operas were head and shoulders above those of others of the same date in this respect. He did not anticipate future developments; his effort was to attract the then public by the best possible art that he could give them. The subject matter of the operas would prove another bar to their acceptance. They, for the most part, treat of the not always very edifying loves and doings of gods and goddesses, Roman emperors, etc.; and though many will flock to see *Alcestis* performed in the Greek of Euripides, or *Julius Cæsar* in the English of Shakespeare, it is hardly likely that they would care to see the same subjects treated with all the conventionality and trivial formality of an eighteenth century entertainment.

A third objection would be that the vocal parts were written to suit the powers of special singers, and were invariably altered when it was necessary that they should be sung by others. It is scarcely possible that singers could be found to execute the more difficult songs now-a-days; and even if they could, Handel is no longer among us to alter and adapt his music to their special powers. Again, his delicate instrumentation would be entirely lost, for where are the players to be found for the violetta marina, the gamba, the theorbo, etc.?

Many of the recitatives and songs are of such beauty that they can be heard with great pleasure singly, as concert pieces, but we cannot conceive a modern audience tolerating a succession of some twenty or thirty of them on the stage in one evening.

Chapter XV

The Oratorios—Handel's use of the works of other composers—The Serenatas, Concertos—Obsolete instruments—Organs with pedals—Chamber music—Handel accused of noise—The origin of "Additional Accompaniments."

FROM what has been said in the foregoing chapter, it might be inferred that we considered that Handel's music was out of date and antiquated. This we believe is true of the operas as a whole, but not of single pieces from them. With the oratorios we are on entirely different ground. To Handel an oratorio meant an opera on a sacred or secular subject, sung without scenery and without action, and therefore relying entirely on the power of the music to attract the audience. For it must always be remembered that Handel was not, like Bach, writing exactly as his genius drove him, and caring little for whether he pleased his congregation or not, as long as he reached his own lofty ideal. Handel also had the loftiest possible ideal; but it was to attract the public by the very best music they were capable of appreciating.

In oratorio then he set to work in quite a different way from opera. The more or less obsolete instruments were discarded, and he relied on the orchestra of violins, violas, violoncellos, flutes, oboes, bassoons, trumpets, trombones, horns and drums,[1] besides the organ and

[1] This is the modern orchestra, the clarionets only being omitted.

harpsichord. He no longer made journeys to Italy to find the latest attraction in the way of singers; and that abomination, so attractive to the aristocracy, the artificial soprano, soon ceased to be employed. The operas depended on soloists for their effect; the oratorios on massive choruses. Moreover, the subjects were for the most part taken from Scripture history instead of from classical antiquity; and with a people by whom the Bible is studied so much as by the English, these dramatic works began to attract the general public, even if the aristocracy held aloof from them. They were no longer merely idle and expensive amusements; they were chiefly performed in Lent, and struck deeply into the religious feeling of the people.

In the dramatic oratorios the hero appears and sings in person, as Samson, Judas, etc., and is surrounded by other characters. The *Messiah*, on the other hand, is an epic poem, in which the singers describe the events impersonally. Although treating of the same subject as Bach's *Passion Music*, the construction of the *Messiah* is entirely different. In Bach's *Passion* an "Evangelist" narrates the events, which are emphasised by the chorus, who represent Jews, apostles, etc., and the Saviour himself speaks: the music for the soloists and the congregation represents the emotion that is aroused by the events narrated. In the *Messiah* the congregation take no part, the soloists are impersonal, and they and the chorus carry on the narrative by means of passages of Scripture bearing on the story. The *Passion Music* is a religious service: the *Messiah* is a sermon.

The overture, in E minor, is in the same form as all the other operatic and oratorio overtures, but it is of an

exceedingly grave character. The fugue was at first objected to as not sufficiently dignified for its position, but succeeding generations have discovered that it, like all Handel's religious works, particularly expresses the pious exaltation of mind that the audience naturally experience. It is said that the overture concluded with a minuet in E major, when played apart from the oratorio. A tenor voice sings prophetic passages from the book of Isaiah, telling of the coming events: "Comfort ye my people, saith your God. Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, every mountain and hill made low, the crooked straight, and the rough places plain"; then the chorus answers, "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed." A bass voice now sings, from the prophets Haggai and Malachi: "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts; I will shake the heavens and the earth; and the desire of all nations shall come: The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?" The chorus sing, "He shall purify the sons of Levi, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." The prophecy is concluded with another passage from Isaiah, sung by a contralto voice in recitative and accompanied by the organ: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel; God with us."

Prophecy now ceases for a time; the singer and the chorus address the prophet, saying, "Get thee up into the high mountain; lift up thy voice with strength; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God."

A bass voice now foretells that "Darkness shall cover

the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise, and His glory shall be seen upon thee, and the Gentiles shall come to thy light. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; and they that dwell in the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." The chorus sings, "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given." The fervour excited by these words finds its expression in the well-known florid passages of the chorus, which are to be sung mezzoforte; while at the words, "Wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God!" the full orchestra and organ enter fortissimo. Prophecy is now concluded, and we are taken to the plains of Bethlehem, where shepherds are heard playing one of the airs used by the "pifferari" of south Italy at Christmas. An angel appears who brings them good tidings: "For unto you is born this day a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth." A soprano air follows bidding the daughter of Zion rejoice: "Behold, thy King cometh; He is the righteous Saviour; He shall speak peace to the heathen." "The eyes of the blind shall be opened; the ears of the deaf unstopped; the dumb shall sing; He shall feed His flock as a shepherd. Come unto Him ye that are laden, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." The chorus sing, "His yoke is easy, His burthen is light." This ends Part I.

Part II. brings us into the presence of the Saviour. The chorus, in a solemn *largo*, bids us "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world"; the contralto voice describes in heart-rending accents how "He was despised and rejected of men; a Man of sorrows and

acquainted with grief." The chorus, always in solemn *largo*, sings, "Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him"; then, in a powerful fugue, "and with His stripes we are healed." Another chorus follows: "All we like sheep have gone astray; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." The tenor sings, "All they that see Him laugh Him to scorn"; the chorus in mocking accents follows with "He trusted in God that He would deliver Him; let Him deliver Him if He delight in Him." A tenor recitative describes how "Thy rebuke hath broken His heart: He looked for some to have pity on Him, but there was no man; neither found He any to comfort Him. He was cut off out of the land of the living."

Now comes the soprano solo bringing comfort, "But Thou didst not leave His soul in hell, nor didst Thou suffer Thy holy one to see corruption." The chorus hereupon take up the joyful strain, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and the King of Glory shall come in: let all the angels of God worship Him." The catastrophe is over; the Saviour has risen and ascended to heaven. The bass sings, "Thou art gone up on high, Thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men." Now follow the good tidings to the Gentile world. "The Lord gave the Word; great was the company of the preachers." The soprano voice comments, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace." The chorus sing, "Their sound is gone out into all lands, unto the ends of the world."

But the world is not yet ready to receive the glad tidings. The magnificent bass aria "Why do the nations

so furiously rage together," with its tumultuous accompaniment, well represents the anger of the rulers of the earth, who "rise up and take counsel together against the Lord and His anointed." The chorus in their turn take counsel against the rulers: "Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yokes from us." The tenor voice addresses the Saviour: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." The climax is reached; the heathen are subdued, and the chorus burst into shouts of "Hallelujah, for the Lord Omnipotent reigneth; the kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever." This ends the second part. The work that the Saviour came to do is accomplished. It is now for man to do his part.

Part III. opens with the confession of faith, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep."

"Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead . . . in Christ shall all be made alive."

How this is to be brought about is described in the bass solo with its magnificent trumpet obbligato, "The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible."

The chorus sing "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ," and the oratorio ends with a paean of praise, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power and riches, and wisdom and strength, and honour and blessing"; followed by one of

the greatest masterpieces of musical art, the "Amen" chorus.

The *Messiah* towers above all the other oratorios of Handel in the estimation of the English people, and the reason is not far to seek. The English, whatever their faults, are a religious race, and in this work they find the highest ideals of the Christian religion set forth and enhanced by music, which in its strength, its sincerity, and its entire fitness to the subject, appeals to learned and unlearned, rich and poor, with equal force. The massive choruses, the powerful solos and recitative in which the highest skill of composer and performer are called forth, drive home to every hearer the truths of his religion more powerfully than the finest oratory can do.

Handel wrote his *Messiah* in the very midst of his misery and bankruptcy. The "things of this world" seemed to have no effect on the workings of his genius, or it is possible that they drove him to concentrate his powers more than ever on his lofty subject. That he was deeply moved by it is well known.

The work was completed in twenty-two days; like Mozart, when he began to write, he worked at white heat to the end; but there is evidence that the actual composition had been more or less worked out in his own mind before it was put on paper, for in the Fitzwilliam Museum there are some preliminary sketches for the *Messiah* and other works. It is well known that Mozart completed all his works in his head before he began writing them down. It is probable that Handel would destroy his sketches as so much waste paper when a work was completed, and that the existing ones escaped his notice.

The *Messiah* is a household word with every English-

man, whether music-lover or not; and even those who, through temperament, do not appreciate Handel's music (for no music in the world appeals to all alike), usually acknowledge its greatness. We have heard the "Hallelujah" chorus, with its frequent reiteration of the single word "Hallelujah," described as irreligious: to us it seems pre-eminently to suggest the sudden and spontaneous cries of joy of a multitude who are greatly moved by an event which concerns them very deeply. Handel was in an intense state of religious exaltation when he wrote it, saying afterwards, "I did think I did see all Heaven before me, and the Great God Himself."

The "Hallelujah" chorus in *Judas Maccabæus*, representing the organised welcome of an earthly hero coming home from war, is of an entirely different character.

There is scarcely a single oratorio for which Handel did not follow the practice common in those days of borrowing from some of his own previous works, and the *Messiah* is no exception to this rule. Four of its choruses, namely, "His yoke is easy," "He shall purify," "For unto us," and "All we like sheep"; and the duet, "O, death! where is thy sting?" are partly or wholly taken from several of his chamber duets.

The compiler of the words, Mr Jennens, was not satisfied with Handel's setting of the *Messiah*. Writing to one of his friends in 1740 he says: "I shall show you a collection I gave Handel, called *Messiah*, which I value highly, and he has made a fine entertainment of it, though not so good as he might and ought to have done. I have with great difficulty made him correct some of the grossest faults in the composition. But he retained his

overture obstinately, in which there are some passages far unworthy of Handel, but much more unworthy of the *Messiah*." Handel took the criticism much more mildly than he was wont to do. He wrote to Jennens, "Be pleased to point out those passages in the *Messiah* which you think require altering"; and he made many alterations and improvements from time to time.

The other oratorios, with the exception of *Israel in Egypt*, are entirely different in plan from the *Messiah*. They are, as we have said, dramatic works, in which the characters appear in person; the choruses are generally sung by Israelites, Philistines, priests and augurs, nymphs and swains, virgins, etc. The treatment is the same, whether the oratorio is concerned with a sacred or classical story, and the work differs from an opera only in the absence of scenery and action, which are left to the imagination of the audience, in the preponderance of massive contrapuntal choruses, and the simpler orchestration.

Borrowings from other composers

We now have to deal with one of the most difficult problems that confront the student. Handel, like Bach, constantly borrowed from his own earlier works, adapting new words to music previously used. This seems to have been a common practice in those days. Another apparently recognised practice was the use of fugue or variation subjects, or ground basses, by whomever composed, as the basis of new compositions, and no one seems to have objected. Bach uses fugue themes by Legrenzi, Corelli and Albinoni without acknowledgment; Handel uses the subject of the Goldberg variations; and the well-known subject of Bach's great G minor organ fugue

was undoubtedly suggested to him by a sonata of Reinken. It was constantly used as a theme for candidates for organ appointments to extemporise upon.

We can therefore put aside the criticism that delights in finding "coincidences," resemblances between a fugue subject of Handel and another by someone else.

But Handel was in the habit of appropriating whole sections of oratorios, operas, etc., by other composers; altering the words, rescoring and generally improving the music, with all the effects his genius was capable of, and then incorporating it into his own oratorios, operas, etc., without any acknowledgment.

The greater part of the choruses in *Israel in Egypt* are adapted from a manuscript eight-part *Magnificat*, which Rockstro, from an examination of the paper, watermark, and handwriting, attributes to between the years 1737 and 1740. The MS. is unfinished and undated; Handel was usually most careful to date both the beginning and end of his compositions. Now in 1857 a mysterious copy of this *Magnificat* was discovered in the library of the Sacred Harmonic Society, bearing the inscription, "Magnificat del Rd. Sigr. Erba." It was at once concluded that Handel had "borrowed" his *Israel* from one of two composers, Giorgio Erba, a violinist who published some sonatas in 1736, or Dionigi Erba, a celebrated maestro and composer who flourished at Milan about 1690. The letters "Rd." seem to imply that the owner or composer was a priest; and no priest of this name is mentioned as a friend of Handel. Chrysander attributes the composition to Dionigi, of Milan. Rockstro thinks that the expression *del* instead of *dal* shows that that particular copy of the work *belonged* to the Rev. Signor Erba, not that it was

by him, but this cannot be borne out. The mystery still awaits explanation.

But if this were the only instance of borrowing wholesale from another composer, it need not trouble us much. From a serenata of *Stradella* he borrowed part of "The people shall hear," "He gave them hailstones," "And believed the Lord," "He spake the word," "He led them forth"; and from a canzona by J. C. Kerl, "Egypt was glad when they departed." From five Italian duets by G. C. M. Clari (1699-1745) he borrowed five portions of *Theodora*: "Come, mighty Father," "To Thee thou glorious Son of worth," "How strange their end," the second movement of the overture, and "Descend kind pity." From eight pieces for the harpsichord by G. Muffat (1690-1770) were taken the first movement of the overture; flute aria; chorus "From Harmony"; organ aria in *Cecilia*; portions of the 1st, 5th, 8th, 9th, 10th, and 12th of the Grand Concertos; the introduction (which takes the place of the overture) and march in *Joshua*; parts of the overture of *Theodora*; march in *Judas*; the fugue in the overture to *Samson*. From a *Te Deum* by F. A. Uria or Urio (1682), ten numbers of the "Dettingen" *Te Deum*, and parts of *Saul*. From the oratorio *Jephte*, by Carissimi (1604?-1674), part of *Samson*; and from a mass by Habermann (1706-1783), portions of *Jephtha*.

Handel was recognised among his contemporaries as a man of the highest honour and integrity; and many modern writers have exercised themselves a good deal over these "borrowings," which, from their being unacknowledged, seem to be really literary thefts. But if we look into the matter closely we shall see that these thefts were per-

fectly compatible with the spirit of the age. Property in literary works was not recognised. Every publisher, every performer, was practically at liberty to make what use he could of a composer's works. When Handel found that his clavier pieces were being published without his sanction, and in an inferior form, he had no idea of going to law in the matter. We have seen that many of his compositions were pillaged, as a matter of course, by Walsh ; yet this did not prevent him from employing Walsh. The law would not have protected him, and it had probably never occurred to anyone at that time that such things should be a matter of legislation. He took the only course open to him, of republishing the works himself in a more correct form. Everyone used everyone else's compositions as he willed. No one ever thought until the middle of the present century that wrong was being done. If this practice had been recognised as theft, what a splendid chance there would have been for Handel's numerous enemies ! They could have brought an indictment against him of being unable to compose music for himself, and, therefore, appropriating the labours of others.

If it be said that Erba, being an unknown composer, Handel could steal from him with comparative safety, the same cannot be said of Carli, who was a contemporary of Handel, and whose works were well known, and admired by the greatest masters of the time, and of Muffat, another contemporary, whose *Componenti per il cembalo* were published in 1727, and were considered his masterpiece.

But, it will be said, Bononcini was obliged to leave England owing to the odium incurred by his appropriation of Lotti's madrigal. The cases are not quite on all fours.

"Dettingen" *Te Deum*

Handel, following a universal practice, did not merely copy out the music of others; he made it the basis of far richer and more effective music than they could do—he adapted it to other words; rescored it to a great extent, and so made it his own. Bononcini simply copied out the madrigal word for word, and note for note, without improving or altering it, and this was considered as theft; the other practice was no more than an enlargement, as it were, of the practice of using fugue subjects of others for new fugues, etc. That the practice was not even more universal may probably be attributed to the fact that there were no other composers (in England at all events) who could improve on the works of the Italian and German musicians.

Three manuscript copies of Urio's *Te Deum* exist. Of these, one, in the British Museum, has the following note: "This curious score was transcribed from an Italian copy in the collection of Dr Samuel Howard, Mus.D., organist of St Bride's and St Clement Danes. It formerly belonged to Mr Handel, who has borrowed from hence several verses in the 'Dettingen' *Te Deum*, as well as some other passages in the oratorio of *Saul*, T. B.[1] This copy was written by John Anderson, a chorister of St Paul's, 1781."

It is evident from the above note that some twenty years after Handel's death his practice of borrowing was noticed without comment; and on another copy of Urio's work, now in the library of the Conservatoire at Paris, is written a remark, "Mr Handel was much indebted to this author, as plainly appears by his *Dettingen Te Deum* likewise a duett in *Julius Cæsar*, and a movement in

[1] Thomas Bever, Fellow of All Souls, Oxford.

Saul for carillons, etc., etc.—J. W. Callcott, May 16, 1797."[1]

We may hazard the opinion then that it is undeniably proved that Handel did borrow largely from other composers without acknowledgment: that what he borrowed he practically made his own by the exercise of his genius; and that in the then state of public opinion, it never once occurred either to him or to any of his friends or enemies that in so doing he was acting dishonourably. It was clearly a case of the survival of the fittest. If Erba or Urio or Carli had attracted the public more than Handel, we should have heard of them rather than of Handel; and he would not have thought of adapting the music of others if he could not have made it more attractive than it was already.

Various names were given to the smaller vocal works; *Acis and Galatea* was called a "Masque,"[2] "Pastoral," "*Serenata*" in different editions. It was, as we have seen, composed for the Duke of Chandos, and performed at Canons about 1720. It was revised in 1732 for a performance at the Haymarket Theatre, and again in 1733 for the Oxford Act.

The *Acis and Galatea* of 1720 was an English play; the *Serenatas* of 1732 and 1733 were mostly sung in Italian, and were a combination of the Canons *Acis*

[1] "Dictionary of Music and Musicians," Grove, vol. iv. pp. 209 and 210.

[2] Masque: a dramatic entertainment, usually upon an allegorical or mythological subject, combining poetry, vocal and instrumental music, scenery, dancing, elaborate machinery, and splendid costumes and decorations. The performers were usually persons of rank. Grove's "Dictionary," vol. ii. p. 225.

with the *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo*, composed at Naples in 1708, with additions; and in 1740 Handel returned to the original Masque of 1720, but divided it with two acts, adding a chorus, "Happy we," to end the first act. Between the acts a concerto was played on the organ by Handel or some other. The part of Damon was sung by a tenor at Canons, but afterwards was put into the treble clef, and marked "for the boy," and many of the soprano solos in the oratorios are intended for "the boy." The choruses of *Acis* are in five parts, soprano (boys), three tenors, and a bass, like the Chandos anthems, but at later performances he apparently caused the first tenor part to be sung by contralto voices. The orchestra was a small one, consisting of two oboes, two violins, basses and harpsichord. To these were added in some of the solos, a piccolo, two flutes, and, in the chorus, "Happy we," a viola. The work differs from a secular oratorio in having scenery on the stage, and from an opera in the importance and length of the choruses.

Handel spared no pains in altering, rewriting, and adapting his works to varying times and circumstances. No work was ever complete and finished; nearly every new performance saw it provided "with additions and alterations." Except in the case of the *Messiah* he looked upon all performances as "entertainments" of a high order which must be varied to suit the particular singers, and each particular public.

The "Concerti Grossi" were very popular, and took the same place at concerts as the symphonies of later composers. The orchestra consisted of two principal and two ripieno violin parts, viola, 'cello and figured bass; to these were occasionally added oboes, bassoons and flutes.

The concerto usually began with a slow, moderate, or maestoso movement. Then came an allegro, and an adagio in which the solo violins and 'cello were expected to exhibit their skill in ornamentation of the given themes. This was followed by an allegro of fugal character, and there was usually a final movement in triple time; but there are exceptions to the above plan, as in the third of the concertos for strings alone (Op. 6), where a *Polonaise Andante* takes the place of the usual adagio, and by a rare exception the fugato movement is omitted. These concertos, popular as they once were, would be no more acceptable to the general public of to-day than the operas. The succession of movements in the same key, the monotony of the orchestration, and the small range of modulation would pall, though there is plenty of spirit and verve in the actual themes.

There exists in the Fitzwilliam Museum an incomplete "overture" for two clarionets and corno di caccia. The clarionet, or little trumpet (clarino), was invented about 1690 at Nuremberg, but it had not come into use as an orchestral instrument during Handel's lifetime. The corno di caccia, or hunting horn, or French horn, was frequently used by Bach.

Organ Concertos

The organ concertos are partly original and partly arrangements of other works. The second set of six were pirated by Walsh from the orchestral concertos, and arranged for the organ. There is also extant a single movement in D minor for two organs and orchestra. The general construction of these concertos follows the plan of those for orchestra.

The accompaniment consists of two oboes or two flutes,

one, two, or three violin parts, viola and basses. No. 6 of the first set is for harp or organ. The organ plays the same notes as the orchestra in the tuttis, and the solo portions consist for the most part of florid passages ("divisions") for the right hand, with single notes for the left. Rarely are there more than two parts, and the orchestra, if it accompanies at all, only plays a few notes here and there. There is none of the rich orchestration we are accustomed to in the pianoforte concertos of later composers. Pedal organs were practically unknown in England at that time; it is remarkable that neither Smith or Harris, who had learned their art in Germany and France, ever built a pedal organ in England.[1] Perhaps expense, want of space, and insular prejudice, may have been against them.

The concertos have the appearance of being composed for comparatively small organs. There are none of the massive effects that are found in the works of Bach and the German school; all the forte passages are played by the orchestra in conjunction with the organ, which is practically treated like a harpsichord, in which the chief effects are produced by arpeggios and runs, rather than sustained sounds.

The first concerto of Op. 7 shows that there must have been somewhere in England an organ with pedals, for its andante, which is on a ground bass, has a passage of thirty-three bars without the orchestra for "organo a 2 clav. e pedale," in which the ground bass is given to the pedals, on a separate stave.

We learn from Matheson that Handel, in his youth, surpassed him on the pedals, and from Burney, that on

[1] "History of the Organ," Hopkins & Rimbault.

his first arrival in England he used to go to St Paul's Cathedral to play on the organ *for the exercise it afforded him in the use of the pedals*. It is evident, therefore, that pedals had been added to this organ by the year 1710, and it is not impossible that Handel might have had them temporarily added to the manuals of some of the organs on which he played at public entertainments, and as no one but he could use them, that, with the above exception, he omitted printing a part for them in his published concertos. The addition of a pedal-board coupled to the manuals, and without separate pipes, would entail little trouble, no extra space, and merely nominal expense, and it was universally applied in Germany to the clavichord in this way for the use of organ students.

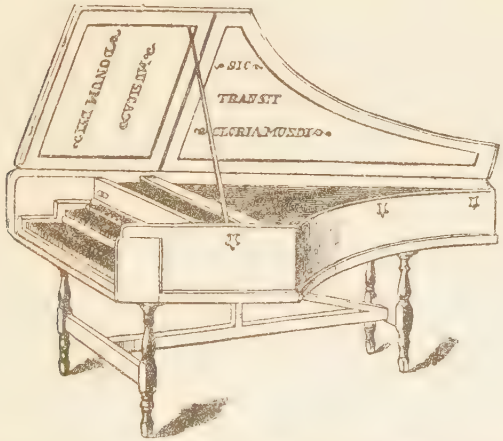
Chamber Music

Handel composed a certain amount of chamber music in his early days, for harpsichord alone; for viola da gamba and harpsichord; for two violins and violoncello, with figured bass; flute and figured bass. These compositions were popular in their day, but suffer from the same defects as the concertos from a modern point of view, *i.e.* want of variety.

Handel's orchestra was a large one, containing twelve first and twelve second violins, at least four bassoons, and four violoncellos. There were two harpsichords, and apparently a considerable number of oboes and flutes. Quantz, in his "Memoirs," says "Handel's band is uncommonly powerful." Side-drums were used in *Joshua* in the chorus, "See the conquering hero comes," and occasionally in the march in *Judas Maccabæus*. The chorus in the *Messiah*, "Lift up your heads," had two separate wind bands besides the strings, *i.e.* 1st band:

2 horns, 2 oboes, bassoons (plural); 2nd band: 2 horns, 2 oboes, bassoons (plural).

He was as careful and moderate in his handling of masses of sound as Richard Wagner, and, of course, the



Harpsichord by Ruckers, in South Kensington Museum, formerly the property of J. C. Smith the younger.

same foolish things were said of his music as we were accustomed to hear twenty years ago said of Wagner's.

On the occasion of a concert, during the time the trumpets were playing, a thunder-clap happened to burst right over the building; whereupon the King said to Lord Pembroke, "How sublime! what an accompaniment! How this would have delighted Handel!"

In another place we read—"There was a time when

the man mountain Handel had got the superiority, notwithstanding many attempts had been made to keep him down, and might have maintained it probably, had he been content to have pleased people in their own way; but his evil genius would not suffer it; for imagining, forsooth, that nothing could obstruct him in his career while at the zenith of his greatness, broached another kind of music, more full, more grand (as his admirers are pleased to call it), and, to make the noise the greater, caused it to be performed by at least double the number of voices and instruments than were ever heard in the theatre before. . . . At one time I expected the house to be blown down with his artificial wind; at another time, that the sea would have overflowed its banks and swallowed us up. But beyond everything, his thunder is most intolerable. I shall never get the horrid rumbling of it out of my head. This was, literally, you will say, taking us by storm."

Origin of "Additional Accompaniments"

In course of time the *Messiah* and other of Handel's oratorios became known on the continent, and, since organs were not often found in the concert rooms, Mozart was commissioned by Baron von Swieten, about 1788, to write additional wind parts, for performances of the *Messiah*, *Alexander's Feast*, *Acis and Galatea*, and the *Cecilia Ode* which took place at the Hofbibliothek at Vienna. Other composers followed suit, with less reverence than Mozart had shown; Adam Hiller, for example, who introduced "extraordinary things" [1] into the score of the *Messiah*. It does not appear that Mozart ever intended his additional accompaniments for publica-

[1] R. Franz, Introduction to the *Messiah*.

tion : they were merely to be used in the absence of an organ. In 1800, Breitkopf published the *Messiah* with "Mozart's" accompaniments ; but later investigation has shown that several numbers in this edition were the work of Hiller, in which great liberties were taken with the original score. Perhaps the most salient example is in the aria, "If God be for us," which is completely re-scored by Hiller, and has been always accepted "as altered by Mozart."[1] But Mozart was careful not to touch a note of Handel's music : he altered nothing ; he merely added extra wind parts to the original score. The matter was fully investigated by Robert Franz of Halle, who published the *Messiah* with Mozart's accompaniments, and an important explanatory introduction.

Some admirers of Handel would like to abolish all additional accompaniments and return to the simplicity of the original : but conditions have changed so much that it is doubtful whether this would be an advantage. In the first place, the orchestra of Handel's day usually outnumbered the chorus. Oboes, bassoons and flutes were used in masses like the violins, and not in single instruments to a part as at present ; the tone of the ancient wind instruments was much weaker than those of the present day, and audiences have become so accustomed to a richer orchestration that they would, in all probability, find that of Handel's time far too monotonous. It is very doubtful if we shall ever, as a practice, return to this simplicity, though, from an antiquarian point of view, an occasional experiment would be interesting. But whether we eventually abolish additional accompaniments or not, the innate vigour, the simplicity, directness,

[1] Novello's Edition of 1859.

and thoroughly wholesome nature of Handel's music will commend itself to the bulk of the English nation as long as it retains its present sturdy character. Handel wrote strong music, for a strong and free people, and they have thankfully accepted the legacy he has left them.

Handel Societies

A society was established at Boston, Massachusetts, in 1815, called the Handel and Haydn Society for performing the works of these composers. It obtained a charter in the following year, and has given many important choral and orchestral works, by all the great composers, with a chorus of about 600 voices.

In 1843 a "Handel Society" was formed for the publication of a standard edition of the works of Handel, by the late Sir G. A. Macfarren, Sir W. Sterndale Bennett, Sir Henry Bishop, Sir George Smart, Dr E. J. Hopkins, Dr Crotch, Moscheles, and others. This society published the *Coronation Anthems*, *L'Allegro, il Pensieroso ed il Moderato*, *Esther*, *Cecilia Ode*, *Israel in Egypt* (edited by Mendelssohn), *Acis and Galatea*, the "Dettingen" *Te Deum*, *Belshazzar*, *Messiah*, 13 *Chamber duets and 2 trios*, *Samson*, *Judas Maccabæus*, *Saul*, and *Jephtha*. It dissolved in 1848, and the publication of the works was continued by Cramer & Co. till 1858.

In 1856 the Handelgesellschaft was formed at Leipsic for the publication of Handel's works, by Dr Chrysander, Franz, Gervinus, Hauptmann, Moscheles, Liszt, Rietz, Meyerbeer, and others. The publishers were Breitkopf and Hartel, and the works were edited by Dr Chrysander. The King of Hanover guaranteed it against loss, the Prussian Government afterwards taking over the guarantee. It had in 1900 completed the publication of the whole of Handel's works with the exception of the *Messiah*.

Chapter XVI

Influence of Handel on English composers

HANDEL left no pupils to carry on his work. Having assimilated and made his own all the important features in the music of his forerunners, Keiser, Steffani, Purcell, Scarlatti, Lotti, and others, he stood absolutely alone; there were no musicians who could approach him in England, and he had no successors. He had imitators, naturally, by the score; composers who could catch the tricks of his style, and make a momentary reputation thereby. This condition is common to all great composers; none has yet appeared who was not succeeded for a time by a host of imitators.

He wrote in the so-called "Italian style." If we compare his "Dettingen" and "Utrecht" *Te Deums* with that of Purcell in D, the difference between the Italian and the English style becomes at once apparent. One reads through the Purcell score, and is struck with the boldness of the choral effects, the beauty and tenderness of some of the solos and duets; but when one turns to the Handel scores, one sees the same subject treated on a far grander scale; the ritornels are of immense length and importance compared to those of Purcell, the fugal subjects are more worked out, the orchestra takes a place

that is equal to, and often of greater importance than, the chorus. Both composers wrote their *Te Deums* for festival occasions, and both threw all their energies into the effort to produce the best results known to them. The difference is like the difference between an English and an Italian cathedral: for example, St Paul's and St Peter's. St Paul's stands surrounded by buildings, hardly seen, modest in size and in ornament, but beautiful in its own way, and specially dear to the English people. St Peter's, on the other hand, is of gigantic size; it stands in a clear space of many scores of acres in extent; the beholder is struck by the size, the luxurious ornaments, the brilliant colouring, the enormous spaces both inside and outside the building. In a like manner the musician is struck by the luxuriance and magnificence of the form and accessories of Handel's works as compared with those of his contemporaries, while of internal beauty there is little to choose between Purcell and Handel.

But it is just this overpowering grandeur and strength that struck a blow at native English productivity, from which it only began to recover in the latter half of the nineteenth century. English music was practically all Handel or Handelian: our cathedral composers were influenced by him, and our audiences would listen to no music made in England except the oratorios of Handel. It is true that numbers of English composers had made oratorios, some of them very fine ones; but they could not compete with the Saxon music that the English nation had made its own; they were performed a few times, perhaps, and then lost sight of.

Who hears nowadays of performances of any of the oratorios of Arne (1710-1778), Arnold (1740-1802),

Crotch (1775-1822), Bexfield (1824-1853), Greene (1696-1755), Hayes (1738-1797)? Efforts are being made to revive the music of Purcell amongst the cultivated few, but it is scarcely likely that the general public, accustomed to the magnificence of the *Messiah*, of *Israel in Egypt*, of *Samson*, will learn to appreciate the equally great, though less massive and luxuriant, music of Handel's predecessor.

The recovery from the blow dealt at English music began with the appearance of Sterndale Bennett (1816-75), who for a time stood alone; he was followed by Sir Arthur Sullivan, whose loss we have had to lament so lately, and then by a number of younger composers; and after a lapse of nearly a century and a half from the death of Purcell, the English school of composition, begun by him and nipped in the bud by Handel, began to show signs of again coming to life. What the future may bring forth no one can tell; one thing is certain, that there is no evidence at present of any foreign giant coming here and trampling to death the vigorous young English school of composition that is growing up.

The above remarks apply chiefly to choral and orchestral music, for which the English nation has always shown a preference over opera. Shall we ever have a settled school of English opera? We have had our Wallace, our Balfe, our Bishop, who wrote fine music on the Italian plan of a series of airs, beautiful in themselves, but scarcely complying with the requirements of the "music drama" which apparently is destined to take the place of the old Italian opera. We have had an excellent school of Comic Opera, begun by Arthur Sullivan and carried on by others; but will the operas and the operatic style of Balfe live? or

will the Savoy operas, filled as they are with allusions to the events of their own day, be able to keep the stage in the future, when the topics to which they allude are forgotten? Doubtless many of their airs and choruses will be popular long after the operas themselves have disappeared from the stage; we see this in the operas of Handel, of Purcell, of Gluck, and many others of the old composers, some of whose airs are as popular as they ever were. It seems almost impossible that opera, which makes such enormous demands on all concerned, and especially on financial resources, can ever be maintained all the year round at a high state of efficiency on the proceeds of the performances alone. It is possible that now and then some exceedingly clever and energetic manager, with plenty of capital, may, by combining it with other and less expensive entertainments, be able to keep it going; just as the famous Popular Concerts were at first started and kept going as an adjunct to St James' Hall, until a large enough public was created to make them self-supporting. But is it right that so important an element of refinement and pure enjoyment as opera should be subject to such chances for its existence? We spend many thousands of pounds a year in educating the masses in "useful" subjects; we subsidise the art of Painting; our great towns are doing their best to ameliorate the condition of the working classes; why should not the lives of the whole of our town populations, and not of the so-called working classes only, be ameliorated by the establishment of permanent opera-houses? They would probably in a few years pay their way, or nearly do so; the opportunity is at hand, now that we have a rising school of English musicians, and

there is no foreign giant to overshadow and nullify their efforts.

But "Englischer Componist? Kein Componist!" said Schumann, and there are doubtless many who, agreeing with Schumann, will say that even if Handel had not appeared, or had remained in Germany, we should have had no great school of English composers during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The English race is, it is true, backward in its appreciation of the importance of art as a factor in social well-being. We are insular and extremely prejudiced, and it is after all doubtful whether the English composers who succeeded Handel, even if they had the advantage of constant production of their works, would have been sufficiently in earnest to have carried on Purcell's work. Handel had a remarkable combination of talents: the loftiest enthusiasm, the highest ideals, were in him joined with an unusual talent for business, a combination rarely to be found in musicians.

Earnestness of purpose is essential in the making of a great composer, and it is just this that is too often lacking among those musicians whose highest aim is to become doctors of music, and who have little conception that music in its highest sense can, if properly used, profoundly affect the well-being of a community. It may be said that the appearance of Mozart did not kill the musical productivity of German musicians. The reason is easy to see; he was a German, writing for Germans, and he was followed by Germans who were earnest enough to carry on the work of their fellow-countryman.

It is not impossible that had Purcell lived he might have founded, through pupils, an English school, and that there would have been no place for Handel in England.

But however much Handel may or may not be responsible for the dearth of English composers of the first rank during a century and a half, there is no doubt that the English nation as a whole owes an enormous debt of gratitude to him for the masterly way in which he compelled them to accept and assimilate the grandeur and beauty of his music.

Catalogue of Works

Numbers in brackets refer to the volume of the German Handel Edition, in which the works will be found. Dates refer to first performances, unless otherwise specified.

OPERAS

Almira (55). Hamburg, January 8, 1705. Handel's first opera.

Nero. Hamburg, February 26, 1705 (lost). Libretto by Feustking.

Florinda. Hamburg, about 1706 (lost).

Daphne. Hamburg, about 1706 (lost).

Roderigo or *Rodrigo* (56). Florence, 1707.

Agrippina (57). Venice, 1708. Libretto by Vincenzo Grimani, a Venetian nobleman.

Rinaldo (58). Handel's first opera in London, Queen's (King's) Theatre in the Haymarket, February 24, 1711. Libretto by Rossi.

Il Pastor Fido (59). Queen's Theatre, Haymarket, November 26, 1712. Libretto by Rossi.

Teseo (60). Queen's Theatre, January 10, 1713. Libretto by Haym. Handel's only five-act opera.

Silla (61). Never publicly performed, but possibly privately at Canons.

Amadigi (62). King's Theatre, May 1715.

Radamisto (63). The first opera composed by Handel for the Royal Academy of Music, April 17, 1720. Its three versions are given in the German Handel Society's edition. Libretto by Haym.

Muzio Scævola (64) (third act of). King's Theatre, April 15, 1721. Libretto by Rolli.

Floridante (65). King's Theatre, December 9, 1721. Libretto by Rolli.

Ottone (66). King's Theatre, January 12, 1723. Libretto by Haym.

Flavio (67). King's Theatre, May 14, 1723. Libretto by Haym.

Giulio Cesare (68). King's Theatre, February 20, 1724. Libretto by Haym.

Tamerlano (69). King's Theatre, October 31, 1724. Libretto by Haym.

Rodelinda (70). King's Theatre, February 13, 1725. Libretto by Haym.

Scipione (71). King's Theatre, March 12, 1726. Libretto by Rolli.

Alessandro (72). King's Theatre, May 5, 1726. Libretto by Rolli.

Admeto (73). King's Theatre, January 31, 1727.

Riccardo Primo, Re d'Inghilterra. King's Theatre, November 11, 1727. Libretto by Rolli.

Siroe (75). King's Theatre, February 17, 1728. Libretto by Metastasio, adapted by Haym, and curtailed by Handel.

Tolomeo, Re d'Egitto (76). King's Theatre, April 30, 1728. Libretto by Haym. The last opera composed by Handel for the Royal Academy.

Lotario (77). King's Theatre, December 2, 1729. Libretto founded on one by Matteo Noris.

Partenope (78). King's Theatre, February 24, 1730. Libretto by Silvio Stampiglia, 1699.

Rinaldo (58). New version. King's Theatre, 1731.

Poro (79). King's Theatre, February, 2 1731. Libretto from Metastasio's "Alessandro nell' India."

Ezio (80). King's Theatre, January 15, 1732. Libretto by Metastasio.

Sosarme (81). King's Theatre, February 19, 1732. Libretto by Mattei Noris, 1694.

Orlando (82). King's Theatre, January 27, 1733. Libretto, an old one, by Braccioli of Venice.

Arianna (83). King's Theatre, January 26, 1734. Libretto by Francis Colman.

Oratorios

Terpsichore (84). Covent Garden, May 18, 1734, as prologue to Pastor Fido, 2nd version (84).
Ariodante (85). Covent Garden, January 8, 1735. Libretto by Antonio Salvi.
Alcina (86). Covent Garden, April 16, 1735.
Atalanta (87). Covent Garden, April 22, 1736, in honour of the marriage of the Prince of Wales with Princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha.
Giustino (88). Covent Garden, February 16, 1737. Libretto by Count Beregani of Venice, 1683.
Arminio (89). Covent Garden, January 12, 1737. Libretto said by Burney to have been used in 1714 for another composition.
Berenice (90). Covent Garden, May 18, 1737.
Faramondo (19). King's Theatre, January 7, 1738. Libretto by Apostolo Zeno.
Serse (92). King's Theatre, April 15, 1738. Libretto and some of the music probably from an older opera by another composer.
Jupiter in Argos. Advertised, but never performed, 1739. MS. in Fitzwilliam Museum.
Imeneo (93). Lincoln's Inn Fields, November 22, 1740.
Deidamia (94). Lincoln's Inn Fields, January 10, 1741. Libretto by Rolli. Handel's last opera.
Eleven Pasticcios, collected from the works of various composers, and provided with recitative, were arranged by Handel at various times from 1730 to 1747.
Tito. Unperformed and unpublished.
Alfonso Primo. „ „
Flavio Olibrio. „ „
Honorius. „ „
An unnamed opera. MS. at the Fitzwilliam Museum.

ORATORIOS

Passion, according to St John (9). Hamburg, 1704. Words of arias by Wilhelm Postel.
Resurrezione (32). Rome, 1708.
Il Trionfo del Tempo (24). Rome, 1708. Libretto by Pansili.

Passion of Christ (15). Hamburg, 1717. J. S. Bach made a copy of this work.

Esther. First Version. Chapel of Canons, 1720. Libretto arranged by Pope, Gay, and Arbuthnot, from Racine's *Esther.* It was called *Haman and Mordecai: a Masque.*

Esther. Second Version (41). King's Theatre, 1733. Words by Samuel Humphreys.

Deborah (29). King's Theatre, March 17, 1733. Words by Samuel Humphreys.

Athalia (5). Oxford, July 10, 1733. Words by Samuel Humphreys.

Saul (13). King's Theatre, January 16, 1739. Words by Newburgh Hamilton.

Israel in Egypt (16). King's Theatre, April 4, 1739. Words selected from Scripture by the composer.

Messiah. Dublin, April 13, 1742. Words selected from Scripture by Charles Jennens.

Samson (10). Covent Garden, February 18, 1743. Words adapted to the stage by Newburgh Hamilton from Milton's *Samson Agonistes.*

Joseph (42). Covent Garden, March 2, 1744. Words by the Rev. James Miller.

Belshazzar (19). King's Theatre, March 27, 1745. Words by Charles Jennens.

Occasional Oratorio (43). Covent Garden, February 14, 1746. Words probably by Dr Thomas Morell. "Called 'occasional' because its creation and performance were occasioned by peculiar passing circumstances" (Chrysander).

Judas Maccabæus (22). Covent Garden, April 1, 1747. Words by Dr Morell.

Joshua (17). Covent Garden, March 9, 1748. Words by Dr Morell.

Alexander Balus (33). Covent Garden, March 23, 1748. Words by Dr Morell.

Solomon (26). Covent Garden, March 17, 1749. Words by Dr Morell. This work contains double choruses and parts for two organs.

Susanna (1). Covent Garden, spring of 1749. The author of the words is unknown.

Theodora (8). Covent Garden, March 16, 1750. Words by Dr Morell.

Jephtha (44). Covent Garden, February 26, 1752. Words by Dr Morell.

Triumph of Time and Truth (20). Arranged from *Il Trionfo*. Covent Garden, 1757.

SERENATAS, ODES, &c.

Aci, Galatea e Polifemo (53). Naples, 1708. Only three persons are employed, and there is no chorus.

Ode for the Birthday of Queen Anne (46*a*). St James' Palace, February 6, 1713.

Acis and Galatea (3). Canons, 1720. Words by John Gay.

Aci, Galatea e Polifemo (53). King's Theatre, 1732. Revised from the earlier work, and provided with choruses.

The Alchemist. Covent Garden, 1732. Words by Ben Jonson.

Il Parnasso in Festa (54). King's Theatre, March 13, 1734. In honour of the marriage of Princess Anne to the Prince of Orange.

Alexander's Feast (12). Covent Garden, February 19, 1736. Words by Dryden.

Ode for St Cecilia's Day (23). Lincoln's Inn Fields, November 22, 1739. Words by Dryden.

Praise of Harmony. A short piece by Newburgh Hamilton, produced about the same time.

L'Allegro, il Pensieroso ed il Moderato (6). Lincoln's Inn Fields, February 27, 1740. Words by Milton, altered by Jennens.

Hymen. Dublin, March, 17, 1742. This was the opera *Imeneo*, produced at Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1740.

Semele (7). Covent Garden, February 10, 1744. Words altered from those of Congreve.

Hercules (4). King's Theatre, January 5, 1745. Words by the Rev. T. Broughton.

Alceste (46*b*). Composed between December 29, 1749, and January 8, 1750. Incidental music to an English play by Tobias Smollett. Never performed.

Choice of Hercules (18). An Interlude. Covent Garden, March 1, 1751. Words from Spencer's *Polymetis*.

CHURCH MUSIC

Laudate pueri in F (38). Halle, 1702.
Dixit Dominus (38). Rome, 1707.
Nisi Dominus (38). Rome or Halle.
Laudate pueri in D (38). Rome, 1707.
Silete venti (38). Rome, 1708.
Six Alleluias (38). Various dates. For voice and harpsichord.
Utrecht Te Deum and Jubilate (31). St Paul's Cathedral, July 7, 1713.
Te Deum in D (37). About 1714.
Fifteen Chandos Anthems (34). For chorus, organ and orchestra. Canons, 1716-1718.
Te Deum in B flat (37). Canons, 1716-1718.
Four Coronation Anthems (14). Westminster Abbey, September 11, 1727. For seven-part chorus and large orchestra.
Te Deum in A (37). About 1727.
O praise the Lord, Ps. ciii., etc. (36). Anthem for chorus and orchestra. Occasion and date unknown.
Wedding Anthem, Ps. xlv., etc. (30). Eight-part chorus, solos, orchestra and organ. Wedding of Princess Anne, March 14, 1734.
Wedding Anthem, Ps. lxviii., etc. Chorus, solos and orchestra. For the marriage of the Prince of Wales, April 27, 1736.
Funeral Anthem (11). For the death of Queen Caroline, December 1737. Words from various Psalms.
Dettingen Te Deum (25). November 22, 1743.
Dettingen Anthem, Ps. x. and xi. (36). November 22, 1743.
Foundling Hospital Anthem, Ps. xli., etc. (36). 1749.
Three Hymns. MS. in Fitzwilliam Museum. Words by the Rev. C. Wesley. "Sinners obey the Gospel word." "O Love divine, how sweet thou art." "Rejoice the Lord is King."

Instrumental Music

VOCAL CHAMBER MUSIC

Seventy-two Solo Cantatas for one or two voices with instruments (52 *a*, *b*, *c*). The language is Italian, but No. 8 is English, No. 18 is Spanish with guitar accompaniment.

Twenty-two Italian Duets and two Trios with harpsichord and violoncello (32).

Seven Italian Cantatas. Unpublished. MSS. in Fitzwilliam Museum.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Six Sonatas for two oboes with thoroughbass for harpsichord (73). Composed at 11 years of age.

Sonata for viola-da-gamba and cembalo concertato in C. Composed at Hamburg, 1705 (48).

Klavierbuch aus der Jugendzeit (48). A collection of suites, written about 1710, forming the originals of some of his later clavier works.

Three Sonatas for flute and harpsichord (48). Probably written about 1710 at Hanover.

Water Music (47). 1715.

Suites de pièces pour claveçin (2). Published 1720.

Fifteen Solos for a German flute, oboe or violin, with a thoroughbass for harpsichord or bass violin (27). 1724.

Six Concertos (21), Op. 3. "Concerti grossi con due violini e violoncello di concertino, e due altri violini, viola e basso di concerto grosso ad arbitrio." Published by Walsh in 1729, and known from the predominance of the oboe as the Oboe Concertos, though bassoons and flutes are also used.

Nine Sonatas or Trios for two violins, flutes or oboes, with a thoroughbass for harpsichord or violoncello, Op. 2 (27). Walsh, 1733.

Suites de pièces pour claveçin (2). Second volume pilfered by Walsh in 1733 from a collection made for the young Princesses, and not intended for publication.

Pièces pour claveçin (2). Five pieces published by Witvogel in Amsterdam, 1733. Several claveçin pieces still remain in MS. at Buckingham Palace and the Fitzwilliam Museum.

Overture for the pasticcio Oreste (48). Produced December 18, 1734.

Six "Fugues or Voluntarys for the organ or harpsichord," Op. 3*a* (2). Published by Walsh in 1735.

Overture in G minor for the pasticcio Alessandro Severo. February 5, 1738 (48).

Six organ Concertos, Op. 4 (48). Walsh, 1738.

Seven Sonatas or Trios for two violins or German flutes, with a thoroughbass for the harpsichord or violoncello, Op. 5 (27). Walsh, 1739.

Hornpipe, composed for the concert at Vauxhall, 1740 (48). For strings in three parts.

Six Concertos for organ or harpsichord. Pilfered by Walsh in 1740, and arranged by him from the orchestral concertos.

Twelve grand Concertos, Op. 6*a* (30). For strings only, in seven parts. Published by Walsh, April 21, 1740.

Pièces pour le claveçin (2). Published by Cluer, November 14, 1742.

Forest Music (47). 1742.

Fire Music (47). 1749.

Concerto for two organs and orchestra in D minor (48). The first movement only is extant.

Overture in B minor (48). Apparently adapted by Walsh from the overture to *Trionfo del Tempo.*

Organ Concerto in D minor (48). Two movements.

Organ Concerto in F (48). Also as a double concerto for two wind bands with strings (supplement to 47).

Partita in A (48).

Six little Fugues (48). These are believed by Chrysander not to be by Handel.

Concerto for trumpets and horns.

Concerto for horns and side-drums.

Eight short pieces for orchestral instruments called Sinfonie diverse (48).

Overture in five movements (incomplete) for two clarionets and corno di caccia. MS. in Fitzwilliam Museum.

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Glossary

Academy of Ancient Music, The, was founded about 1710 for the study of vocal and instrumental music, and the collection of a library, by a body of instrumentalists, amateur and professional. Its first conductor was Dr Pepusch, and the vocal parts were performed by the children and gentlemen of the Chapel Royal. It ceased to exist in 1792. It met at the Crown and Anchor Tavern. (Grove's Dictionary.)

Arcadia. A society or "accademia," founded at Rome about 1690 by poets and priests for the encouragement of art. Each member assumed a name as a "shepherd." Handel was unable to become a member, as he was not yet twenty-four years old when at Rome, but he was freely admitted to the meetings, which took place at the palace of the Marquis of Ruspoli on the Esquiline hill.

Arch-Lute. A kind of Theorbo or bass lute.

Ariosti, Attilio, called by Schœlcher Attilio, born about 1660, died in obscurity. A Dominican monk, who gave up orders for the musical profession. Produced successful operas at Venice. In 1690 became capellmeister to the Electress of Brandenburg. In 1716 came to England and played a solo on the viola d'amore in Handel's *Amadigi.* Left England in 1728. He composed fifteen operas, an oratorio, and lessons for the viola d'amore.

Baroness, The. "There was about that time a lady, a German, as is supposed, a fine singer, who sung in the operas abroad, and even at London, known by no other name than the Baroness" (Hawkins, vol. iv. p. 254). She sang in *Lavinia,* by Bononcini, and some other operas, and was the teacher of Anastasia Robinson.

Basso de' Flauto, used in *Giustino*, the bass flute or recorder.

Bononcini or **Buononcini,** John, born at Modena about 1672 (*Fétis*). One of a family of musicians. Composed in all styles, but chiefly opera. Violoncellist at the court of Vienna about 1692, where he also distinguished himself as a composer. Produced operas at Rome, 1694, Vienna, 1699. In 1702 he seems to have been attached to the court of the King of Prussia, where he had previously been in 1696. In 1716 he was invited to compose operas in London for the King's Theatre. Here he became the rival of Handel. The Duchess of Marlborough gave him a pension of £500 a year to compose for her. In 1731 he was accused of passing off a madrigal by Lotti for his own, and in 1733 he left England to assist a certain Count Ughi to work out the secret of making gold. He soon left this imposter and went to Paris, then to Vienna, and afterwards to Venice as composer. The date of his death is unknown, but he was working at Venice at the age of eighty-four (*Fétis*).

Buxtehude, born 1637, died 1707. One of the greatest organists of his time. Was organist of the Marienkirche at Lübeck. Bach walked from Arnstadt to hear him play, and was so fascinated that he overstayed his leave of absence by three months.

Clavicymbal. A name for the harpsichord. The better class of this instrument had two key-boards, stops producing 4, 8, and 16 feet effects, and often organ pedals. It was superseded by the modern grand pianoforte, which is similar in shape.

Clayton, Thomas, a member of the royal band. Studied in Italy, from whence he brought a number of Italian songs which he worked up into an English opera, *Arsinoe*, and claimed the composition as his own. This being successful, he tried his hand at original compositions, in which he failed completely, especially in his setting of Addison's *Rosamond* and Dryden's *Alexander's Feast*. He was associated with Haym and Dieupart, in abortive efforts to establish opera at Drury Lane Theatre from 1707 to 1711.

Dieupart, Charles. A French violinist and harpsichordist

who, after the failure of his attempt with Haym and Clayton to establish English opera, took to teaching, afterwards to drinking, and died in poverty in 1740.

Farinelli, Carlo Broschi, 1705-1782, said to be of noble birth, had the most beautiful (artificial) voice that was ever heard. A pupil of Porpora, he made his first appearance at Rome in an opera by his master. Here he had a contest with a trumpeter .of great reputation, whom he excelled in duration, brilliance, crescendo and diminuendo of a single note, and in wonderful shakes and other passages. Being beaten in a contest with Bernacchi, the "King of Singers," he became his pupil, and developed into the most remarkable singer that ever lived. From being the most brilliant, he changed his style, at the suggestion of the Emperor of Austria in 1731, and became the most pathetic of singers. Porpora engaged him to sing in London in 1734, as a rival attraction to Handel's opera-house. Here he sang with such rapidity that the violins could not keep up with him : the enthusiasm he inspired calling forth an ejaculation of a lady in the boxes, "One God, one Farinelli." He made an income of £5000 a year while in London, out of which he built a house in Italy, calling it "English Folly." He went to Spain, where he cured Philip V. of melancholy by his singing, and remained with him twenty-five years at a salary of £2000. Under Philip's successor, Ferdinand VI., he became first favourite, of more influence than the prime-minister, and political adviser. His character was such, that in spite of his prosperity he never made any enemies, even amongst the courtiers, his rivals. He returned to Italy at the age of fifty-seven and lived the rest of his life at Bologna, where Burney met him. He was of a most estimable character, a rarity among Italian singers of those days.

Flageolet. A kind of little flute, used chiefly by shepherds and country people (Grassineau).

Flauto. The Flûte-douce or Flûte-a-bec, called also English flute or recorder. It was held vertically and had a whistle mouthpiece. Flauto traverso, the cross flute, called also

German flute, the only kind used in the modern orchestra. The fife is a small flauto traverso.

Gasparini, Francesco, 1665 (?)-1727. Pupil of Corelli. Maestro of the Chapter of St John Lateran, and master of Benedetto Marcello, the amateur composer. He wrote thirty-two operas, some of which were performed in London, and a treatise on the art of playing from figured bass.

Geminiani, 1680-1761. A famous pupil of Corelli, an excellent soloist, but not a good leader or conductor. He came to England in 1714, taught and played at the houses of the nobility, had a rage for buying pictures, and finally got into a debtor's prison. His pupil, Lord Essex, released him, and he was given a post as conductor at Dublin, though he never took it. He was a brilliant violinist, and wrote a treatise on the art of playing this instrument. He died at Dublin.

German flute. See Flauto traverso.

Haym, Nicolo Francesco, 16—-1730 (?). A German, born at Rome. Settled in London and joined Dieupart and Clayton in endeavouring to establish opera. Arranged and composed several new operas, besides playing in the orchestra. Was the author of several of Handel's and Bononcini's librettos. Wrote a treatise on medals, two tragedies, and a treatise on rare Italian books, besides being the author of a MS. history of music in Italian. He was also a good etcher, to whom we are indebted for the only existing portraits of Tallis and Byrd.

Haute-contre. See page 205.

Heidegger, John James, 16—-17—. A Fleming. Manager of the opera-house, by which, though it failed, he eventually acquired a large fortune. He was called the Swiss Count, was chiefly distinguished for his ugliness, which was frequently alluded to by poets and writers and caricaturists of the day. He wrote the libretto of *Amadigi*. He disappeared after the failure of his attempt to reopen the opera in 1738.

Keiser, Reinhard. Born near Weissenfels, 1673, died at Copenhagen, 1739. Was a pupil at the Leipsic Thomasschule and a student at the University. He is chiefly

known for the remarkable influence he exercised on German opera by his forty years' exertions at Hamburg, whither he went in 1694. He was the first German to put dramatic force into music, and to hold his own against French and Italian operatic composers. He was also successful in oratorio. Matheson says that no other music than his was performed or listened to at Hamburg.

Lotti, Antonio, born at Venice, 1667 (?). Died there 1740. Pupil of Legrenzi. Became organist of St Mark's, and after severe competition, Maestro di Capella, the other candidates being Porpora and Porta. Produced an immense amount of music, sacred and secular, of a very high order of merit.

Lute, a pear-shaped instrument, probably of Persian origin, producing a peculiarly beautiful, though not powerful, tone. It had from six to twelve strings, sounded with the right hand, like those of a guitar, the left hand being employed to "stop" the strings on the neck, which was fretted. It was very troublesome to tune, and the strings constantly broke. This, with the weakness of its tone, caused it to gradually become obsolete after the middle of the 18th century.

Nicolini, Grimaldi. 1673(?)-17—. Born at Naples, was at first an artificial soprano, but afterwards became a contralto. Made a great reputation in Italy, and appeared in London in 1708 in Scarlatti's *Pyrrhus and Demetrius*. He was a great actor as well as a great singer, an unusual combination. He sang the chief part in Handel's *Rinaldo* and *Amadigi*, and finally left England in 1717.

Ottoboni or Otthoboni, Cardinal Pietro. 1668-1740. A patron of art of all kinds, and the collector of a fine library, part of which is now in the Vatican library. He was a man of enormous wealth, and held numerous ecclesiastical appointments. He was a benefactor of the poor, was a composer of operas, oratorios, etc., and "made the greatest figure of any of the Cardinals, or any other person in Rome."

Pepusch, John Christopher. 1667-1757. A great theorist, had

an appointment at the Prussian Court, but came to England in 1700, having been shocked at seeing an officer decapitated without trial for a trivial offence. After playing in the orchestra at Drury Lane, and doing various kinds of musical work there, he became organist and composer to the Duke of Chandos, which posts he resigned in favour of Handel. He took the Doctor's degree at Oxford in 1713, and became music director of the theatre at Lincoln's Inn Fields, for which he composed several masques, and arranged the *Beggar's Opera*. He married Margarita de l'Epine, who brought him a dowry of £10,000, which enabled him to carry on his studies in Greek and other ancient music, besides publishing a treatise on Harmony and other works. He was an active member of the Academy of Ancient Music, and in 1737 became organist of the Charterhouse. He was also a great teacher; Travers, Boyce, and Cooke were among his pupils.

Ripieno. Extra parts for violins and violas were added in forte or tutti passages, in order, says Grassineau, "to give the music more grandeur." These parts, called "ripieno" or "full," were either independent of, or in unison with, the chief violin and viola parts. They were usually intrusted to the less accomplished performers.

Robinson, Anastasia. 16--1750. Was descended from a good Leicestershire family. Her father was a portrait-painter, who, becoming blind, was unable to support her. She therefore became a pupil of Croft, Sandoni and the Baroness, and sang at the opera for some years, till she became the wife of the Earl of Peterborough, privately at first, though just before his death he made the fact public. She was never a first-class singer; her intonation was defective, though her voice was good. She sang in many of Handel's operas with fair success.

Scarlatti, Alessandro. 1650-1725. Founder of the Neapolitan school of opera. Maestro to the Queen of Sweden. Was the first to bring the Da Capo aria into general use, and to use accompanied recitative. Became Maestro to the Viceroy of Naples, 1694, assistant Maestro at Sta Maria Maggiore in Rome, 1703, and chief Maestro, 1707. Re-

turned to Naples, 1709. A most prolific composer for both church and theatre. Was teacher at three Naples Conservatories, where he trained a number of pupils who became distinguished.

Scarlatti, Domenico or Girolamo, son of Alessandro. 1683-1757. A great harpsichordist and successful opera composer. In 1715 became Maestro of St Peter's at Rome. Produced an opera in London in 1719, and in Lisbon, 1721. Music master to the Spanish Court, 1729-1754. He left his family in poverty through his habit of gambling, but they were helped by Farinelli. He composed an enormous number of short harpsichord pieces, and did much to develop the technique of that instrument.

Senesino, Francesco Bernardi. 1680-1750. One of the most famous artificial sopranos of the 18th century, came from Dresden in 1720, and sang in Bononcini's *Astarto*, afterwards singing in the greater number of Handel's operas. He left England in 1726, but returned for *Admeto* in 1727. He left again after the failure of the Royal Academy, returning to sing for Handel in 1730, with whom he finally quarrelled in 1733. During the next two seasons he sang for the opposition theatre, and then retired from public life. His voice was mezzo-soprano. Hawkins gives his portrait.

Steffani, Agostino. 1655-1739. Of obscure parentage, a choir boy of St Mark's, Venice, and afterwards of Munich, where he was apprenticed to Kerl the organist. On leaving Kerl he became a Court musician, and went to Rome to finish his studies. In 1860, after a course of mathematics, philosophy and theology, he was ordained as priest, with the title of Abbate of Lepsing. In 1689 he became Capellmeister to the Court of Hanover, where a very high intellectual standard prevailed, through the influence of the Electress Sophia ; but he gave up this for diplomatic work, for which he was eminently fitted, becoming eventually Ambassador at Brussels, and the Pope's Protonotarius. Meanwhile he did not cease to compose—he had produced many

operas, and much church and chamber music of most important calibre, and Handel learned a great deal from him, besides making use of some of his themes. He had a European reputation, and in some parts no music was thought equal to his. Handel succeeded him at Hanover when he gave up his Capellmeistership for diplomacy. He was an honorary member of the London Academy of Ancient Music. Handel met him at Ottoboni's house in Rome and heard him sing, in 1729, at the age of 74.

Tesi, Vittoria. 1690-1775. Called Tramonti, studied under Redi and Campeggi. Made her first appearance at Bologna, afterwards sang at Florence, Venice, Naples, Milan and Vienna, where Burney met her when she was 80 years old. She was also a good teacher (Fétis). She had a contralto voice of masculine strength and sometimes sang airs intended for a bass—her voice was also of extraordinary compass (Chrysander). Burney relates that a certain count wishing to marry her, she did her best to dissuade him from a step that would bring disgrace on him and his family, but finding her efforts of no avail, she secretly left her house one morning and offered a baker's apprentice 50 ducats to marry her, not to live with her as man and wife, but simply that she might tell the count she was already married and so save him from his proposed step and herself from his attentions. Chrysander does not believe Mainwaring's story of her having fallen in love with Handel.

Theorbo. A lute with a double head containing two sets of strings.

Traversa. See Flauto.

Valeriano, Cavaliere Pellegrini, had a counter tenor (alto) voice of great beauty. Sang the chief parts in *Pastor Fido* and *Teseo* on their first production. Little is known of his life; Fétis does not even mention him.

Viola da Gamba. The leg viol or bass viol, with six strings, and a fretted fingerboard. It was superseded by the more powerful violoncello.

Violetta. A small viola.

——— Marina. A kind of viola with sympathetic strings.

Introduced by Castrucci into England in 1715, and used by Handel in *Orlando*, 1732.

Zachau, Friedrich Wilhelm, son of a town musician at Leipsic, born 1663, died 1712. "One of the best and most industrious musicians of his time" (Grove's Dictionary). In 1684 became organist of the Liebfrauenkirche of Halle. He is chiefly known as the first teacher of Handel, who always spoke of him with the greatest respect, and frequently sent remittances to his widow.

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